

Eckhart Tolle Retreat May the Mind Be Servant of Awareness 11hour44min part1

[Speaker 4] (0:00 - 0:00)

Welcome.

[Speaker 1] (0:15 - 1:28:14)

Those of you who've been here or on other retreats before won't be waiting for the retreat to begin. It's begun already. You may detect in yourself as you sit there, occasionally, an urge to get to the next moment.

It's quite normal. It's the normal state of consciousness. And that normal state of consciousness and that urge to get to the next moment are continuously being frustrated here.

If you don't have the urge to get to the next moment and you're not falling asleep either, that's important. That means a different state of consciousness is already arising from within you. Falling asleep is another possibility and it may happen to some of you.

It happens even to monks in Buddhist monasteries, occasionally. But to detect in yourself that urge, that need for the next moment, that's really all that is necessary, to notice that, oh, and that already is also, that is the arising of a deeper consciousness. From where that urge can be observed.

So it's not necessary to create a dilemma on top of the urge to get to the next moment and say, I should not have this urge to get to the next moment, but I do. And you have another personal dilemma and you can think about that for the next few days. And add it to the problems that you have.

As if you didn't have enough problems out in the world, you can create some more here. And it's the human mind, it likes to do that, because then it has something to do. So simply to see it is enough.

The seeing frees you from being trapped in the conditioned mind, the conditioning of the human mind, which is not a personal matter. It looks like me and my problems, but it's the conditioning of the human mind. It comes as a personal sense of self, an exclusively personal sense of self.

Me and my problems. Me and my need for the next moment. And what is arising here, as you observe the conditioned mind, is the arising of what we could call unconditioned consciousness.

Which is simply to be aware without labeling what is. Very important throughout these

days here is the silence. The words are secondary.

The words are not here to give some alternative philosophy or explanation of the universe, but simply to point to something that is beyond words and beyond thinking. Accessing a dimension of consciousness that is deeper than thinking. You could also call it higher or deeper, depends what perspective you use to look at it.

A dimension of consciousness that is deeper or higher than thinking. And that, in many of you, is already arising. And that I sometimes call the new state of consciousness.

It's not really new. Maybe new to you. I've seen a secondhand shop that was called new to you.

It's also relatively new on the planet. Yes, Buddha talked about it, other teachers pointed to it, but it's still relatively new on the planet. It's not new in the truest sense because it's timeless, so it can't be new.

But if you start looking into words and analyzing each word that I say, that will lead you astray. It is another temptation of the mind to take a word or a statement and say, yeah, but that's not quite right. Of course not.

No word is quite right. So if you expect words to be totally right, then you get drawn into another dilemma, which is disagreeing with something, not realizing that it's only a tiny perspective. It's only a little pointer.

It's not it. It only points. All the words only point beyond themselves.

To what? To the new state of consciousness, which isn't new at all. And that is the state in which you're no longer trapped, totally trapped in the stream of thinking and the emotions that go with that stream of thinking.

What arises is already arising in many of you is that state of simple, pure, aware presence. And we are here to deepen that, for this to enable to deepen. Or in some of you, perhaps for the first time, to have a glimpse of that.

It doesn't matter in some of you, it's a deepening of what's already happening. Or for some of you who are sitting here at this moment and wondering, what is he talking about? If you sit here for long enough, you may suddenly get a glimpse of what it is that the words point to.

And then the next moment, the mind will come in and try to understand the glimpse. And immediately, the glimpse will have become a problem. Zen has been trying to teach that also, of course, for a few hundred years.

And not many got it, because they tried to understand it through thought. And so this is why I'm saying the words are secondary. Throughout these days, if you can be aware,

not just of the words, but the silent spaces between the words, which is not something that the thinking mind would be interested in, because in the silent spaces between the words, there is nothing much to think about.

Not only the silent spaces, the undercurrent of silence or stillness that is there when the words are spoken. That is our practice, part of the practice here, as you sit here, so that you are not here to listen to a talk, that's only peripheral, on the surface. But you are here to enter that different state of consciousness, or allow it to arise, is perhaps a better way of putting it, allowing it to arise.

And as you sit here, this happens simply by being attentive to the silent spaces. And all that means is notice them. It's not that difficult.

And to the thinking mind, that is not very significant. Okay, so what comes next? Okay, you've talked about the silent spaces, now what's next?

Each time you notice silence, there's a little space of stillness inside you. We don't need to measure it in terms of seconds or minutes, three seconds, who knows, three minutes, three hours, it doesn't really matter, time isn't involved here. What is more important than how long that space is there inside you, we could say is, what matters is whether it's there at this moment, or how often it comes, the arising of that inner spacious stillness.

And all that is needed as you sit here is to notice silent spaces. The noticing is the arising of stillness inside you. Which is consciousness without thought, just conscious, unconditioned, true intelligence.

The most important event in your life, if we can even call it that, all words are limited, the most important event in your life is that, the arising of that state of consciousness. And the strange thing is, that most important event doesn't come with a lot of noise, fire, there it is, it's coming, drums, trumpets, the mind says, where is it? What's happened?

Nothing has happened. Enlightenment, a concept, if you're here to achieve it, you probably won't, because you're already making the next moment into a desirable goal that is more important than this. And as that dimension emerges, more and more you find that thinking no longer dominates your life, still happens, of course, but doesn't draw you in totally.

One could say that a space develops between you and your thought processes. A space develops between you and the flux of emotions that go with thinking. And again, those words are limited.

It's not really a space between you and the words, that's another little perspective on it, it is the realization that you are that space in which your thinking happens. In which your emotions happen. And that's all that's required this week, is that, to know yourself as

that space.

The arising of inner spaciousness, which I sometimes call space consciousness. That sounds like science fiction. Outer space, inner space.

Space consciousness as opposed to object consciousness. And that is amazing, because if you consider that on the planet, even though the shift is happening, the majority of human beings are totally trapped, totally absorbed by object consciousness. Objects, things.

Object consciousness, of course, is thinking. The arising of an object in the space of your consciousness, a thought, which draws you in completely. So people's lives are consumed by, absorbed by objects, the objects of their thoughts, the thought processes.

But on an external level, it manifests as a continuous preoccupation with things that need to be dealt with. And material things, events, you know how life is when you, your normal existence, the world making demands on you, this is matters, this is important, and then the next thing is important, and then you have five things that are all important. And this is what consumes people's lives.

But it goes down to being consumed by, totally absorbed by the objects that arise. Because really, it's not the external world, it's really an inner phenomenon. Philosophers argue whether there's actually anything out there.

Because all we know is the inner world, where sense perceptions get translated into nerve impulses that reach the brain, then the impulses become decoded, and some kind of image emerges of what the external world is like. What is the relationship between that image and the actual external world? Is there an external world at all?

Is it all a dream that's happening in consciousness? Leave that. You were waiting for an answer.

So, your attention being totally absorbed by thoughts, because it comes down to thoughts, even the things that seem to matter so much in your life are not really the things that matter, they are thought forms. Each thing becomes a thought form, a mental image, and that absorbs your attention. Even if you might be concerned about your shares on the stock market these days, or maybe you've given up already.

And so, you're not really concerned about the stocks, it's the thought form of stock that absorbs your attention. There may be no stock market there at all, it may be a figment of your imagination. It could be the collective dream of Wall Street.

But whether it is or not, we don't need to take a position here and say, yes, it's real, and then half the audience will say, it's real, Wall Street exists, and the other half says, no, it does not exist. Whether or not it exists out there, what really one cannot argue with, that

what absorbs your attention is not the shares, it's thought forms that have many associations that are to do with me, and my future, and my security, and my old age, and what's going to happen to me. So it's the thought form absorbs your attention.

So all the things that absorb your attention, expressed so nicely by Thoreau, Henry Thoreau, who said, our life is frittered away by detail. Simplify, simplify. And really what he was talking about is the continuous, the world of things that we inhabit, which really is the world of thought.

And our life is frittered away by that, totally absorbed by that. Details. Another beautiful quote about details.

Einstein said, I want to know the mind of God, the rest is details. It's true, the rest is details. And so this is why we are here.

The mind of God is consciousness. Know that. Everything else that comes out of the one consciousness that you are is details.

Of course that will go on, that's fine. So here, realizing, most of humanity's state of consciousness is dominated by objects. The objects of the senses, the objects of conceptual thought, object consciousness.

So much so that they have made themselves into an object in their consciousness, a me. A problematic object, consisting of a conglomeration, a coming together of many objects in consciousness, a little bundle of memories, conditionings, reactive patterns, and it's called me. A person.

And that absorbs my attention completely, because I'm such a problem to me. And everybody's sense of me is problematical and it's a dilemma. Whose life is not a dilemma?

And there is a need to solve that dilemma of me. And that's a, there's a myth of Sisyphus, I believe. It's somebody who has to roll up a big boulder up a mountain.

And he pushes it up the mountain and when he gets to the top it rolls down again. It's a, to solve that self-created dilemma of the self is an impossible task. Although a few times you might think, now I've solved it.

When the stocks suddenly go up. Or you've fallen in love. So to be absorbed by that, and now the possibility is there for humanity, for the first time on a larger scale, to access a deeper level of consciousness.

Not object consciousness, space consciousness. Unconditioned intelligence. Which already some artists, anybody who is creative, has a little bit of access to that in their field of creativity.

Where they become attentive, alert, almost listening. And then the creative impulse comes, the insight comes, the realization comes. Or the activity happens suddenly out of that space.

Intelligence is at work. And you then find yourself doing or saying something that you didn't know before. It just happens.

So a few people have access to it in their little area of creativity. But this is different. This is the arising of that state of consciousness as a shift, not just in one little area of your life.

But something that arises and transforms your whole life. From this limited sense of problematic little me, to something deeper. So that your attention is not totally absorbed anymore by object consciousness and the exclusively personal sense of self.

Which is the dreadful present. So there are two movements here. The arising of that, and the movement of the old.

And the conditioned consciousness, the entity, the mind made entity, the me, is still there. It has momentum. It's a conditioned mind form.

And the fact that you are here on a retreat doesn't necessarily mean that it doesn't come here also. You didn't leave it at home. It's here.

And at times it may not be here. Very powerfully at times the new consciousness arises. And then suddenly you get totally drawn back into the old conditioned object consciousness.

Some thoughts absorb your attention totally. And the thoughts might be saying, What are you doing here? It's pointless.

You left all these problems at home. You should be dealing with that. You should be at home.

You should be somewhere else. For example, many other things it could say. The self, the mind made self.

But here the opportunity is there to notice it. So that your attention is not totally drawn into it. There is an observing presence.

As the old conditioned patterns come up, because they will. This is a few days here is enough to experience all that. Don't expect to experience only bliss.

Perhaps you will. You will experience probably the entire range. Not only externally.

You probably experience all kinds of weather during these days here. We also

experience all kinds of inner weather while we are here. And so noticing that, the conditioned self with its patterns, wanting to draw your attention in again totally, and occasionally perhaps succeeding.

You can recognize it. And an important characteristic of that self is it doesn't like this moment. There is something not right with it.

Either it's something completely wrong with it, or I need to get to some more significant moment. So you notice that. And also it likes to complain.

Fault finding. With whatever it may be. Something in your room.

Something in the food. Something in people around you. The weather.

Well, today it's more difficult. Complaining. The self loves that.

That sense of personal self, the mind itself, likes to complain. Internally or out aloud if somebody listens to you. And if you find somebody who agrees, you can strengthen each other.

And this sounds relatively harmless, but this lies at the root of human madness, which in its harmless manifestation is somebody at a retreat complaining about something. That's the most harmless manifestation of that. And then you go, how is that related to the madness in the world?

How is that related to the Middle East? How is that? Well, let's see.

There's a little me complaining. What does that mean? Why is it complaining?

It's complaining because whatever it complains about is irrelevant. It means, me, I am right. That which I am complaining about is somehow wrong.

That's the essence of complaining. And I'm not talking about genuine complaint, which isn't a complaint at all. It's a fact and says, please, this is no good, what I just bought.

I want to exchange it. That's not complaining. That's stating a fact or saying, this soup is cold.

Please give me a hot soup. That's perfectly fine. That's not complaining.

It's stating a fact. In certain things you need to say something. It happens.

So this is not what we are talking about, but the inner whining and complaining and the pointless complaining that is designed to put yourself, the self, the mind-made self, in a position of rightness. And someone else, which could be a person or a situation or a place, put someone else in a position of wrongness. And the mind-made sense of self, always looking out, looking to enhance its always deficient sense of self, for a moment

feels stronger when it has complained about something or someone or a place, whatever it may be.

Because your sense of self gets strength in the fictitious self that consists of object consciousness. If you can have a mental position of being right, of course it implies, unfortunately, somebody else has to be wrong. Something or someone has, for you to be right, something or someone has to be wrong, otherwise it doesn't work.

So, for a moment, if you are very alert and attentive, you can sense a strengthening of me in your complaint. And that's unconscious, usually. And so that's a movement that the egoic sense of self uses a lot to strengthen itself.

It has other strategies, too. Many other strategies. But this is one of the core strategies of this artificial, fictitious self, ultimately, to strengthen itself.

So, unfortunately, it needs, therefore, some kind of enemy, because when you're complaining about something, it's the beginning of having an enemy out there, which is the other person. It may not yet be recognizable as an enemy, but it's the beginning of that mind movement of me right, being wrong. And so you have the same thing, then, in more extreme manifestations, as a collective, a group of people, which could be a nation or religion, a tribe, being totally identified with their position and their sense of self depending on their position of rightness, their total identification with their mental positions, which says, this is how it is.

And their need, therefore, whoever diverges from that mental position, whoever does not agree with your story, becomes the enemy. And you need the enemy because your sense of self would not sustain itself without it, without feeling that we are absolutely right. So you cannot see anymore that all thought is relative.

No thought or no mental position can contain the entire truth. You don't see that anymore. You get totally absorbed by one thought, a few thought forms, which are then invested with self, a sense of self, personal or collective, the same principle is at work.

And so you can no longer, this was in the New York Times a few weeks ago, an Israeli writer talking about the Middle East conflict, which is absolute madness, but no, it's human madness, just an extreme manifestation of what's been there throughout human history. And what he saw there, he saw very clearly why there's no peace there. It seems no possibility of peace almost gone.

People's inability to accommodate, he called it, people's inability to accommodate a competing narrative. And so what does he mean by that? A narrative is the story that you're telling yourself, our position, that's how it is, that's our interpretation, and not to recognize an interpretation as an interpretation.

And this is total identification with mind forms. And then there are other mind forms,

competing mind forms, that's the enemy. And so that's the need to be right, to assert your rightness, can be so strong as you don't need to kill the enemy to assert your rightness.

So could that be the same phenomenon as somebody on a retreat complaining internally about something? And related to that, the reactivity of the self, related to complaining, another characteristic of the self that is mind made, that is thought forms, identification with thought forms, is its need to react to something. It cannot be for very long without reactivity.

And this keeps you can also observe here, as you sit here or during the retreat, the sudden coming up of, and there can be a lot of momentum behind that. You could observe it perhaps in a conversation that you're having over lunch. Observe, so one of the, our practices here is to observe reactions that come.

Not to say they shouldn't be there, but to observe them. Not to make them into a personal problem and say I should be beyond those things by now. No, just observe.

Just bring a gentle acceptance because you cannot observe fully without acceptance. To observe any phenomenon fully in your life, you need to accept it. You can't observe it completely if you haven't accepted it.

So to bring a gentle acceptance to whatever arises here, during these days here, whatever arises inside yourself, even if it's a complainer. The complainer of course is the opposite of acceptance. Activity is the opposite of acceptance.

So now, but now we are saying something strange, that you can bring a gentle acceptance into what is in essence the opposite of acceptance. Almost a contradiction. But that is the arising of space consciousness.

In Buddhism they call it sometimes the witness, or the witnessing awareness. And so our practice then is internally to allow what arises as thinking, as reaction, as complaining, as an emotion, to be there as it is. So the primordial practice of our retreat is to bring quite simply acceptance to each moment.

Now each moment is not really the right term. To bring gentle acceptance to this moment. Because each moment seems to imply that there are many moments during this retreat.

But that's not the case. There are only many moments as thought forms that remember or project. But in reality your entire retreat consists of this moment.

It always is this moment. It always is the simplicity of this moment. Your retreat is not going to be many moments.

These are thought forms that say oh it's going to be a long retreat or whatever it says. But if you look at the reality of it it's this retreat for the rest of your life by the way is never more than this moment. It can't be.

That is the essence of our retreat is this moment. And when we meet this afternoon and this afternoon is only a thought form when we meet this afternoon of course we'll check in we'll check again and find out if it still is this moment. It probably will be.

And that is some it's such a fundamental truth of such importance that but to the mind it says well it tries to argue with it or say well I don't know if I agree with that. Let me think about that first. And this afternoon I'll show you that you are wrong and I'm right.

That is also liberating that realization that all your life because now really we're talking about this retreat but it is your whole life that your whole life is never more than this moment. Even when you remember the past it can only happen within the space of now. You can only remember it now or the you project the future it's a thought future cannot be more than a thought form because it cannot arrive as future.

Can't be here. Being and now are one. Life and now are one.

You and now are one. You in your essence who you are beyond thought forms the unconditioned essence you and now are one. And it's an amazing realization to suddenly see how simple life can be when you are no longer drawn continuously when your attention is no longer absorbed continuously by object consciousness which relies on past and future and you realize this is all there ever is.

It's always the space of this moment. Whatever form it comes into this space of this moment it's always this moment. Your life is always this moment.

This retreat consists only of this moment ever. And that's all really all that matters here. So we could say that these days here are a setting protected in some ways where we could call it let's call it a greenhouse where in a greenhouse plants grow protected from bad weather.

Well you may not be protected from bad weather here but this is a somewhat protected environment a retreat setting and you can practice living in a state of alignment with what is now and realize the power that is concealed in the present moment and how simple and joyfully life can unfold when you live in inner alignment with what is now. And that yes to what is is the primordial practice and you bring it to external situations here things it is and in that acceptance you find a goodness a goodness you cannot find that lies concealed often behind the the surface appearance of things concealed behind the surface appearance of things lies a deeper benevolence one could almost say a goodness and that is experienced as what one might call inner peace no matter what the external situation is there is the realm of inner peace and inner peace is the realization

that at the core of things there is an essential goodness even though the surface appearance of things may be good or bad at any in any situation the surface appearance of things may be destruction it happens the surface appearance of things may be death at this moment death is happening in nature all around it's the time of year when things die all the leaves falling off the surface is that bad? no in nature you can look at death and see how beautiful it is now in the human realm usually we call death bad and react we bring gentle acceptance to what is the mind might say yes but this obviously is bad yes but with the allowing the isness of this moment comes the realization of goodness even though on the surface it may not appear so even in the face of death that realization of goodness can be there because death is the ending of a form the leaves are forms of life the human body is a form the ending of a form is death and so the realization comes of that which is beyond form that realization can only come to you when you allow the form that this moment takes to be as it is I'm not saying you become passive you're no longer capable of action no it's an inner accepting of this is what is then action intelligent action if it's necessary arises out of that it's the basic the ground the basic realization is the isness and then action is no longer reactive when you do not allow the isness of this moment action is reaction it is not intelligent it is conditioned it is perhaps intelligent in a relative or limited sense but not in a true sense it is not intelligent it is conditioned action it is reaction and that is the meaning of eastern term karma because karma translated means action karma is reaction action reaction which is a continuous cycle that keeps you trapped in the same conditioned existence you reenact continuously so it's only through first of all realizing this is all there is this moment is life itself this moment is as it is because the totality has brought it about whatever event is happening at this moment is connected to the totality of the cosmos nothing is separate there are no separate events and even the physicists these days will agree with that they have seen the interconnectedness of all things buddhists have seen it also even 2500 years ago they saw it and so it is as it is you allow it to be you see the inevitability of is you can't really argue with is is and then that becomes the basis that inner alignment becomes the basis for action if action should be needed very often action is not needed and a simple allowing is enough for a greater intelligence to come into play and you could sit there and things develop in the right way so to allow the form that this moment takes to be as it is instead of reacting to the form that this moment takes allowing this form to be takes you to what we could call the formless consciousness unconditioned not the object consciousness the reaction is the object consciousness so this is a strange almost a paradox people want to reach the whatever they call it ultimate reality the transcendent and usually they regard the forms that surround them in their daily existence as an obstacle to reaching the transcendent or reaching who I truly could be or who I somehow sense I could be the essence of who I am or could be somehow it seems that the universe is conspiring and my daily life and my existence seems to be conspiring to not to hold me back from that I'm surrounded by so many limiting and limited circumstances in my life that there seems to be some kind of conspiracy that wants to prevent me from fully being myself does that feel familiar?

why I want to break out of this this limiting life situation that I'm in and for some people it's their circumstances their living circumstances it's for some people it's their work situation for some people it's their physical body which is beginning to be limited can't move that fast anymore what is this?

I want to break out of this where to know myself fully as that which is beyond form and yet all the forms that are in my life are limiting me impinging upon me from all sides and when I free myself of one limiting form for a little moment and then then the next thing comes in and that's in the nature of object consciousness one thing after another and so that's and so people then live in continuous reactivity to now to a limited extent yes you can improve the forms around you to a limited extent this is true you could be living in a very unpleasant little noisy place dirty hole and then through incredible effort and energy ten years later five years later you finally made it and you live in a mansion this is nice and of course you will have created a different life circumstances you're in a different life situation now and then after a little while of feeling you've made it the new life situation will manifest as other limitations you will find other limitations on you through your perhaps you created a business empire that's why you could afford the mansion and then lots of things there impinge upon you the stock market becomes important a few people I've spoken to told me that they experienced recently they said the dark night of the soul I said what happened they said the stock market well don't know perhaps perhaps and so in your new situation you find other limitations that's and then you try to get free them so there comes a point when you realize yes to a limited extent it's good to you can play in the world of form but without expecting self realization or self enhancement through finally achieving a certain configuration of forms in my life that is absolutely perfect and right it can be for a little while and then you encounter again the other side that every form has inbuilt limitations once you know that the play of form is beautiful you can participate in it but to know yourself beyond form you cannot the world of form cannot help you and here comes the paradox that I pointed to earlier the paradox is allowing the form that this moment takes to be as it is but internally let's say you are living in an unpleasant place it's cold it's wet or damp or noisy or cramped or and there you are sitting on a chair it is the form that this moment takes and you realize the limitations of that form and yet you allow this moment to be as it is which does some people confuse that with accepting a story they are telling themselves in their head concerning this moment and that is a mistake that some people make I've noticed that when we speak of allowing this moment to be they confuse that with creating some interpretation of this moment which is a story and saying well I might as well accept that this is how it is an example of that would be let's say the stock market has crashed and your wife has left you synchronistic event and then the story comes in in your mind which says okay you've worked for nothing for 25 years all that you've built up is all the energy 80% of it you lost and your marriage has failed you failed at that also you failed at your business and you failed at your marriage there's no point in even carrying on now because at your age what can you do who would want you haven't got

enough time to build up another business empire the story goes on in your head it's an interpretation of this moment I failed it's been pointless my life has come to nothing this is a simple story most stories are more complicated than that and that story is then this is not allowing this moment to this the story is not this moment the story is the story in your head so it's mind forms object consciousness so what is this moment what is the form of this moment the form of this moment is not the story about this moment it is the simple appearance of this moment which is chair walls window cold noisy neighbors unpleasant smell but even unpleasant is the beginning of a story so just see just this this is the moment this is now and you're sitting perhaps you still have a chair you're sitting on a chair and that's a strange thing when you just see what happens if I allow this moment without the story and then wow strange suddenly you have by allowing the form suddenly there's a peace that arises from a deeper place and you look around at the forms and it is that spacious presence that is there then when the forms are no longer obscuring that but you can only get to that when you allow the forms that which appeared to prevent you from finding yourself is actually becomes actually the doorway the forms that appeared to be the obstacle become the doorway if you allow the forms not the story the simple form of this moment to be some people have found that without any spiritual teaching simply by experiencing the limitations of their physical form some illness came some disability came to them and at first they had a long story about it their whole life it was their life story became very unhappy their story based identity became very unhappy story the me became very unhappy a lot of resistance to what's happening to why to me why did this happen to me and then after a while the pain just became too much and almost accidentally or by the grace of the divine which is the one consciousness there was a moment of simply staying with the simplicity of this moment pain and not even perhaps call it pain anymore weakness disability just allowing not bringing a no to it but simply a yes this is how it is right now and some people who don't know how much longer they have to live by the way nobody knows but some people in a to some people it's become clear that they don't know maybe because somebody told them you don't know we don't know how much longer you have and so some people can suddenly are reduced by circumstances you are reduced to this moment only this is what life has done to me is the last story the last the last line of your story is this is the sign of an ending story and the last sign of the story that's coming to an end is for example this is look this is what life has done to me all I'm left with is this moment I don't even have a future anymore it's life life is taken away even that from me me and so you didn't realize that you just wrote the last line of your story you don't have a future anymore so where is the story going nowhere you're reduced to this and some people through illness are reduced to just this moment and then oh and suddenly they wake up out of the story of me and absorption in the story and then they they look at you a light shining through their eyes the story has come to an end they may not have an explanation for what happened but just their life has become so simple so easy and if you ask them what happened to you you were unhappy yesterday and now and this isn't it's I don't know they may not be able to say anything about it so I've met a few people

it's wonderful it's so beautiful to meet people without spiritual teaching or teacher it happened to them the illness became their teacher that's what's left is this which means what happened the story collapsed in the absence of future there wasn't much to keep it going anymore the story of me collapsed it doesn't mean that this person no longer remembers their past but they have no self-investment in their memories anymore so who are they they are the aliveness of this moment they are the presence the spaciousness of this moment they are consciousness itself looking through these eyes unproblematic and so that is beautiful when a story comes to an end not your memories self-investment in memories not even your reactive patterns they have a momentum they may go on for a while but even there self-investment and self-identification with the reactive patterns comes as simply the reaction is seen for what it is there is a spaciousness around it because you not only allow what is externally you allow what is internally emotions reactions thoughts come and go that's the form that this moment takes so demanding here to have a certain experience of enlightenment will stop you of course from having it because nothing is needed beyond the form that this moment takes it's that simple nothing is needed beyond the form that this moment takes not in essence to know yourself nothing is needed beyond this form as far as your form reality is concerned which is secondary things may be needed but not at this moment otherwise you wouldn't be sitting here so this is a gentle coming to an end of the story the story based identity and the patterns associated with it our practice then is simply gentle acceptance of the moment the form of it and then you go beyond form to a deeper goodness we will spend of course time also inside part of the retreat some of you may not want to speak at all during this retreat that's fine your mind of course will still be there the internal dialogue may still be there for those who don't want to speak there may be a few tables in the dining hall for those who don't want to engage in conversation i will announce certain periods during our retreat when we are going to keep noble silence not throughout the whole retreat some people say why can't we be silent throughout the whole retreat well you could it's good to not to learn to bring that spaciousness into interactions we may be addressing that also to bring the spaciousness into interactions with people questions also if there are any questions left in a couple of days you have a question wait a day or two if it's still there please ask unless it's something that you need to ask immediately concerning this retreat i'll be very happy to address questions during this week later on not yet today but answers may come also who knows you may find that quite a few questions subside as you go into the retreat the totality the totality of the situation here is the teaching the totality not just the words the silent spaces walking between here and your room not making this moment into a means to an end not making this step into a means to an end to the next step or getting there but just being with what is we'll also be talking about nature making that part of the teaching especially at this time of year when nature seems to be breathing up breathing out it's the out-breath of nature the fall it's called fall in American English I used to call it autumn but fall is more immediate because it's falling it's nature is breathing out out the cycle has come to an end death in a way and there's beauty

hidden there spring is different manifestation everything is moving into new forms are manifesting thousands thousands of new forms manifesting and now the manifestations many of the manifestations of nature are coming to an end the forms go so it's the in-breath is spring of nature the out-breath is now and the out-breath is beautiful for going beyond form because it's when forms dissolve I will ring these bells the opening of our retreat a little bit late but it's fortunately it's still now one or two people sitting here maybe feeling unhappy for some reason if that is the case allow it let me be unhappy then it's not that bad that's a strange thing to do allow the unhappiness to be there okay unhappy unhappy you could look upon yourself as an actor and it happens to be that your part the part assigned to you at this moment is to play the part of an unhappy person play your part through this little allowing suddenly there's a little bit of space around your unhappiness just a little at first and then you allow more and then you notice considerable space around your unhappiness here's the unhappiness which is really it's the self the not of the self and there's space around it

[Speaker 7] (1:28:21 - 1:28:24)

oh the

[Speaker 1] (1:28:44 - 2:21:54)

bell an ancient device is the call to attention presence awakening out of identification with mind forms out of thought a person was studying with a Zen master and it was time to leave and go home and so he came to the master and said can you write something something in my book something that I can then remember remind myself of something important about Zen it's already a sign of course that he didn't get it and so he gave him the book and the Zen master wrote something in it and he looked and he saw he had written attention in Japanese presumably just one little symbol probably shorter than our language just is that all he said surely can you say a little bit more please and he gave it back to the master and the master wrote something else and he looked and he said attention attention and he said oh come on surely there's more than that to Zen and he gave it back please just a little bit more and he got the book back attention attention attention what is this attention and he said well it's interesting but anyway what does attention mean anyway he asked the master what does it mean and the master said attention means attention with Zen stories you never know whether that's the end or not but that is the end now you notice this is an interesting story you can notice two things the mind's need for more say a bit more and then the need for further explanation what does attention mean he wants more explanation of what it and so that is why he doesn't get it because he's seeking the answer in the realm of thought still that's why he's asking really saying give me a little bit more to think about so that I can understand what Zen is through thought and of course the essence of Zen is knowing the dimension of consciousness that is beyond thought not that that is something that you can achieve or attain another obstacle is that belief but that

dimension is already there that's the strength of the strange paradox in you so to speak ultimately within and without are one that dimension of consciousness is already there it is to a large extent obscured by thought by constant preoccupation with thought but without it thought couldn't even be there it is one could say the medium in which all thought forms are floating and it is there in between two thoughts that may be very brief in many people these gaps it is there in the first moment of perception it may be there when you wake up in the morning and the machinery of thinking hasn't started up yet the first moment of opening your eyes at that moment there is certain things already that are being perceived but there is also that beautiful field of still attention in which the perception takes place that is sensed as a kind of background peace the foreground is that which arises in the first instance sense perceptions then thoughts perhaps arise in it thoughts are rising here at this moment present but they haven't taken over so even though thoughts are happening that dimension that is beyond thought is as present or more present here than the thoughts and it is possible to live in such a way that you are conscious continually of this background field even when thoughts happen it does not depend on whether thoughts are there or not that frees you from excessive identification with and attachment to the forms of this life whether they be external forms that come into your life things people situations circumstances or thought forms it frees you attachment excessive identification with the thought forms and the emotional forms also there's the flux the continuous flux of phenomenal existence within and without ultimately it's all within the entire world one could say it takes place within you and it's all happening against this background one could compare it perhaps to water that's everywhere and all these things swimming in it and then the fish says where's the water I've been looking for it all my life and the water makes up the very essence of the fish it's not just around the fish though the fish too is mostly water just a little analogy this is something very obvious subtle yes but so natural could be potentially for a human being to live in connectedness with that dimension and not to sense that not to know that not knowing in a subject object relationship but to know it as the essence of I no longer I am that not to because that refers to some kind of form or name or identification just the essence of I am not to know that is really to be deprived of the most important thing of all which is a no thing the only thing that absolutely matters in one's life is to know that everything else may matter also but only relatively whether you are healthy or ill matters but only relatively whether you are in prison or in a beautiful home matters but only relatively if the prisoner in prison knows that dimension within then he is much better off than you are in the mansion and if the person in hospital bed knows that perhaps even sensing the approach of death and it may have come because there is the impending undoing of the physical form which for some people is one way of encountering that dimension it's a little bit late but it's fine and from there your whole life your whole past suddenly makes sense because it brought you to the flowering to that point the old past which otherwise perhaps is a some meaningless accumulation of events and in some people's lives even seemingly meaningless absurd events or a series of what looks like mistakes a series of things that shouldn't have happened to me were

not really meant to happen but they happened people are trying to make sense of their life on the relative level but you can't whatever edifice you build up mentally something will come and you will no longer be able to make sense of it collectively it can happen when a collective disaster happens such as last year in September not far from here and suddenly people cannot make sense anymore the explanations fail let them fail it's good when the minds attempt to explain to form some philosophy on which I can base my life fails it looks like bad news to the mind but it's good and here it's also failing as we are sitting here I'm taking away from you well not really you are voluntarily letting go of identification with all that I am my name and my story and my thoughts and my emotions me so this sitting here is so easy if you are fully here and that's all that's needed for that dimension to emerge from within you and it's so subtle where is it it's there the moment even if you say where is it and instead of thinking where it is you so to speak listen to find it where is it listen really is an analogy for attention where is it and your attention is there as if you were listening that's it pure field of attention that's why Jesus used some of these parables of somebody waiting for somebody to arrive waiting not in the usual sense of waiting of impatience when is it going to happen but of alertness when is he or she going to come that kind of waiting it's the same state you might notice that is there when you look at something in the state of a tree a flower in the state of attention so no matter what happens in your life there are always two dimensions one could say in your life now most humans are lost in one dimension completely that's the dimension of the manifested world the world of form the world of phenomena the world of time of thought they're totally they don't know anything else and then there's the world the dimension not the world the dimension of the unmanifested the one life prior to form the one consciousness that underlies the all life no matter whether it's life on this planet or somewhere else on the in this galaxy or one other another galaxy of those billions of galaxies the one life prior to form the one consciousness one could almost say that which was there before the universe happened continues to be there even now scientists ask and puzzle over the question what was there before the big bang big bang is the they say is when it all started out of one point or out of nothingness came a whole universe and what was there before then and what was there before time started the mind stops so scientists maybe haven't quite realized that they come up these days physicists come up with koans zen questions that have no logical answer all you can do is the mind it comes to a stop and when the mind comes to a stop that's the answer that's the that is the stillness of the unmanifested and compared to the mind forms it is so subtle that at first you say well um uh and it's the most powerful the only the only power there is the only the essence of all life forms is that and it is that it's only when you know that within yourself as the deepest I am in its deepest sense a simple sense of presence or I am-ness that's left when you forget your name and when you forget your story what's left is the that which always was the essence of your story the one thing that gave you your sense of I so precious and that got mixed up with form with the story of me so your your sense of identity then you think it's in the story of me but really it it is hiding beyond the story it just gets mixed up

with the forms the memories the thought forms because so the innermost essence of who you are even the story of you is true that innermost sense that there is something so precious here that and then because it gets mixed up with form people have this fear that they could lose that through death but that's the one thing that is not lost the essence it is consciousness itself so that's what's left when the form goes and some people need to experience death to find it death means a form dissolves and leaves another formless that's why death is sacred now the opening may not be there for very long it gets covered up quickly and that's why even there are sacred places where great humans who early flowerings of human consciousness as I call them who broke through to that dimension and the place where they died is considered sacred but any place where death happens is sacred because a form dissolved and the form that moment of death the formless shines through that opening and of course there is such a thing as psychological death which is when the identification with the psychological me disappears dissolves sometimes through intense suffering caused by identification with the psychological me it's a beautiful paradox nothing that happens is not right it may look mad but even within the madness the universe is unfolding as it should so the essence of your identity I am that's what's left when all identifications have gone presence beingness I have difficulty with names remembering names because they don't seem that important the being underneath the name that's a different matter that's why I got the name wrong this wonderful artist who does these flower arrangements here his name is Anthony and whenever I meet him there's no I don't meet a name there's simply a meeting on the level of essence on the level of consciousness that's why I didn't remember the name and so the world is then recognized as relatively important but it loses its overriding importance seriousness and heaviness and it's I feel there's so much compassion when I see people how they how important things are to them how what importance they give not only to physical things how much importance they give to situations and what happens or doesn't happen or a circumstance or how much power they place there in the world of form and it always they expect something from it that only the formless can give they expect to find themselves somewhere in there they expect happiness through the world of form it can give you happiness briefly and then it takes it away so you become dependent on what happens or doesn't happen and sometimes it's the littlest the tiniest things that make people unhappy and they I asked why are you unhappy well this this has just happened this what does it matter so it's the the impossible expectation that people place on the world it says fulfill me make me happy the world means places people situations circumstances circumstances doesn't matter all that means the world so they make these they have these expectations and demands and no place no person no situation no circumstance can meet those demands for long and this is why life is experienced by most humans as very frustrating almost designed by some some devious god to frustrate you and many people experience their life as it's designed to frustrate me continuously I've tried so hard and always something happens to frustrate me of course there is an impossible demand beyond being placed upon the phenomenal universe and that demand is not only make me happy because

true happiness in the deepest sense is simply knowing yourself who you are beyond the forms true and lasting joy and happiness but they are looking for happiness through some imagined configuration of forms when my life when those forms in my life those circumstances people places are in the right configuration then it will be fine and it could even happen that for a brief moment they are in the right configuration you just moved to a beautiful new home you just fell in love and the stock market has just gone up and you are told the doctor says you are the most healthy you have the most healthy body I have ever seen everything is just right and then probably you would claim the ego would claim some merit or achievement it would say I did that and because the world of form all the forms look solid this is the illusion when you walk around especially in a city the solid structures man-made the solidity of every form looks so solid and that's an illusion we don't realize that the world of form is very much like vapor or mist physicists know that too they know there is nothing solid here even the most solid building can collapse in a moment the most the grandest edifice whether it be an office building or a temple can collapse at any moment sometimes they do so the apparent or solidity of form is an illusion to anybody who hasn't been to India I recommend at least going there once to experience that the physical universe the solidity of the physical universe is an illusion in India it's much easier to know that because things are not that solid in the physical realm things could go wrong at any moment and it's beautiful and that's maybe the reason why India has produced the greatest sages from the very first spiritual awakening of humanity happened there perhaps because the physical realm is less solid or the illusion is less the illusion of solidity is less there than here so because of the illusion of solidity that's you believe that there can be something permanent in the phenomenal realm but very quickly here too things shift change leave you or make you unhappy today it makes you happy tomorrow it makes you unhappy that beautiful position that you got the husband or wife makes you happy then makes you unhappy anybody who has been through more than one marriage and even those who are still in one marriage know that the person who makes you happy is also the person who makes you unhappy so the demands that people place upon the manifested world are impossible make me happy and when that the only way when that demand is dropped and sometimes this dropping this letting go of that demand can happen when the world has totally frustrated you totally so much has gone wrong so to speak which means not really wrong but against the expectations against what I wanted and needed that you let go of any further expectations not in a negative sense because if you let go of any further expectations in a negative sense that means then you are saying who cares I don't want to know anymore I'm done with the world you're not there's still a lot of attachment but a true letting go perhaps you even smile or laugh it's all crumbled once again and no further expectations are being placed upon the manifested and suddenly you sense this enormous peace what is that everything has gone wrong and yet there's this deep sense of rightness so that can happen in cases where people become totally frustrated it can also happen in a spirit of spiritual teaching to see when you are ready to see that readiness is there because the frustrations have already been there you wouldn't have

come otherwise that's already been there and then suddenly you see the demands and part of the demands very essential part of this demand that is placed upon the phenomenal world is the demand that the future should make you happy because that is very the next moment the need for the next moment and it is a great act of letting go when the psychological need for the next moment is relinquished that's always an essential part of coming to an end of placing expectations because every expectation that you place upon the world to some extent implies future and so it's a wonderful thing that demands that are made upon places people or situations or circumstances are not there and then you are comfortable with places as they are because no matter what place you go to it could be ideal in your imagination when you actually get there something will be there that is not ideal any whatever place you go to and person and circumstance and that's the thing that frustrates you and that demand is not made anymore it could be a simple thing even demands you place upon people understand me he doesn't understand me my parents don't understand me my children don't understand me so is that so bad they understand what they can understand their stage of evolution they understand just enough for them to understand they are okay with not understanding you don't realize that nothing is added to you by having somebody understand you except a psychological thought form that you then say oh it's confirmation that I exist he's confirmed that I exist what is that existence that needs confirmation that you exist or confirmation of the world some people think they need fame fame is totally overrated there's nothing in it that's why some famous actors are interested in this teaching they realized how empty that thing is called fame if fame fulfilled them would they come to this teaching what for they're fulfilled by fame by recognition everybody recognizes how beautiful or great they are so isn't that fulfilling no you think it's fulfilling when you don't have it and when you have it it's fulfilling for a little moment and then it's no longer fulfilling and you see it's another way of finding this dimension one way is being totally frustrated and getting nothing another way is getting everything and being totally frustrated and some famous actors go to drugs they don't they try to deaden the frustration that they feel which ultimately is a form of pain they try to deaden it that way famous people many have been very unhappy committed suicide but some others see that so it doesn't really matter whether it's through achieving everything or achieving nothing you find the opposite for most of you it's kind of a mixture you've perhaps experienced success to some extent and failure to some extent and you've experienced success turning into its opposite so that is the realization that everything in this phenomenal world is fleeting the Buddha came up with that realization impermanent every thing that you encounter he said there are three characteristics of human existence everything is fleeting there's no self in it if you're seeking a self in any situation there's an enhanced sense of self this is why people make these demands make me happy make me feel fully who I am make me know myself fully because happiness is knowing yourself in the deepest level so when you say make me happy you're saying to the world help me to find myself enhance my deficient sense of self this feeling of not enough yet yet this feeling of lack not being fully myself yet please

help me get there this person maybe if they understand me they'll add something to me maybe if the world recognizes my worth I can add that to me and that will do it some achievement and nothing works so it's a self-seeking this demand that is placed upon the world is ultimately a self-seeking in the world through the things of the world the forms the phenomenal and that's why it's frustrating there's no self in any of these things that the Buddha said anatta is the word in Pali uses the characteristic of all conditions is anatta no self and another characteristic there's three characteristics there's one is no self and that was a long time ago one of the first flowers of humans humanity saw that no self impermanence anicca and dukkha is that sounds negative at first but this is exactly what we've been talking about it means the third characteristic suffering it makes you suffer what that means dukkha suffering suffering is one translation another translation is misery another translation is unsatisfactoriness and there are other translations some are quite funny but they all point to that basic element that you find no matter what condition you encounter externally in this life you'll find that somewhere that's why it's so frustrating dukkha anicca anatta the three characteristics when you do not know who you are he didn't add that he just said that but then he pointed the way beyond also now when you know who you are and that's a strange way of putting it all that it means is knowing the realm that is beyond form beyond thought the stillness that is here now what the buddhist sometimes call emptiness which is fullness also but does not contain forms fullness and emptiness prior to forms it is that which Jesus points to when he says I want you to have life in its fullness sometimes translated as abundant life that's what his teaching also is pointing to obviously he's not talking about proliferation of things that was not part of the teaching because that is mistaken when you are only aware of things and not aware of awareness because that's what it is when you are only aware of things not aware of awareness self aware I am when you are not self aware then when somebody speaks of the fullness of life or abundant life all you can think of is more things and this is why the western civilization that kind of lost its way from the source but that's fine too it's all part of how it should be getting lost is good too that's why western civilization came up with shopping malls because all they can think of the fullness abundant life must be more and more things so let's create more and more shopping malls and fill them up with more and more things and this must be the kingdom of heaven that Jesus pointed to but all the people who are running around shopping malls feeling frustrated somehow they are perhaps beginning to see that that is not the fullness of life hmm you can by the way there's nothing wrong with shopping malls you can enjoy walking through shopping malls when you don't need them anymore but when many humans don't need them anymore then I don't know what will happen to them I sometimes enjoy for not too long walking through shopping malls and just looking at the world of form so many forms and then it's enough so that's why the fullness of life is not more of things but it does not refer to that dimension it refers to the dimension of depth that fullness that is there already within you for which you don't need future the fullness that is already the essence of your being now how could you need future to get there so these three characteristics that the

Buddha pointed to impermanence no self and misery that is true as long as you don't know the dimension of depth you don't know who you are beyond identification you don't know the I am before it becomes a story before it becomes a thought then yes then life is suffering and every situation if you go into you will find it there somewhere but when you know the unmanifested the I am then the expectations that are being placed upon the world people places situations circumstances are not there and the strange thing is that then when the expectation is not placed upon them people places circumstances and situations are quite pleasant you can actually quite enjoy them you enjoy places without the demand that they should be in a particular way you can ultimately it comes down to you can enjoy the neediness it's a beautiful play of form the neediness isn't there and it's only then that you can truly enjoy so it's not this teaching and the true spiritual teaching any true spiritual teaching is only one is not a rejection of that dimension of the world but it becomes accepted it becomes you embrace that in the vastness of who you are that world of form is playing itself out continuously fluctuating forms you can enjoy it and even amazing thing is you love it but you love not the form I love the flower I love

[Speaker 6] (2:21:54 - 2:21:55)

you without

[Speaker 1] (2:21:55 - 2:50:50)

knowing your story or your name because what I love is the formless essence that I can sense only because I know it in myself I can sense it in you and sensing it in you sensing what is my essence in you is the realization that we are ultimately not separate and that also applies to any living thing and even all things are living but let's talk about nature it applies to the flower it applies to the tree the cat the dog I sense myself in them you could say God sometimes there is a term a Christian term which is beautiful loving the creator in the creature loving the creature is loving the form that really isn't loving it's attachment my form seeking to enhance itself through adding your form to my form and completing me somehow that's the illusion but loving the formless in the form is recognition of oneness and that is love and so that is how even what you experience as the world of form undergoes a change when you know the formless within yourself what you experience as the external universe takes on greater harmony your world your life takes on a more harmonious flow you are still for a while on this mad planet well the only mad thing about the planet is at the moment humanity but the planet is beautiful and humans are beautiful too it's just a temporary mental illness because they have come to the end of an evolutionary cycle and it's turned into some well the end of a cycle becomes dysfunctional because the new cycle is a deepening is happening the end of this evolutionary cycle yes looks like madness things are not working things are breaking down things are great that's supposed to happen and the madness increases as the mind identified state of consciousness based entirely upon thinking where humans

derive their identity from thinking that is coming to an end and so that's beautiful and you don't even need to believe that most of the things I say here don't require belief because you can you know for yourself that is true if you don't believe if you believe that it's not happening that's fine too the only question is here is it happening here the shift and it is so yes you're still on this planet you witness dysfunction you can also still feel to some extent the pain of this planet sometimes you can still feel it it's no longer it's not personal matter anymore you may still encounter pain body collective pain body manifesting in you it's not your personal problem anymore it is recognized as human pain it is accepted for what it is gently compassionately you have compassion with your own emotional pain which isn't your own at all just looks like it it's human pain you have compassion with that you accept that also and so you realize that acceptance of all the openings into that dimension perhaps the most beautiful the one that works immediately without the need for any kind of time is acceptance that takes you to knowing the unmanifested within yourself acceptance of the manifested if it's pain that's what it is the spaciousness of the unmanifested is there as soon as you accept something fully and then it changes then this is why I'm saying when you live in connectedness with that state even the external changes yes it's still mad but things around you places and people around you unfold more harmoniously and it spreads your consciousness spreads out and affects the world around you which becomes a more harmonious place a place where love is there you see love suddenly because it comes from within you and then you see it reflected coming towards you from others and that's a little miracle when you don't need the world of things the phenomenal to be in a certain way suddenly it turns into a more harmonious place when the need is gone for it to fulfill you it becomes quite a pleasant place and even that which is not pleasant at first sight in this world you will be taken into situations sometimes that are manifestation of the dysfunctional mind identified consciousness and which perhaps contain a great amount of human pain pain body and your presence in those situations will be a decisive factor in bringing about a shift it could be your presence at work your presence in your family your presence wherever humans come together to meet even your presence where there's heavy conflict it may be some of you may be taken to a part of the world where the manifestation of human unconsciousness is particularly extreme and your consciousness there you cannot imagine how important one realized point of consciousness is in any situation one point of consciousness who is not who is no longer totally identified with forms and is no longer reactive to forms but comes from the gentleness the compassion the love that is there when you are there as the formless presence I am and there you sit or stand while conflict may be going on around you and you just watch you look upon it in the state of attention no strain in it relaxed alert attention whether it be a conflict situation that is there happening next to you or whether it be a conflict situation a challenge that affects you directly there is the ability to look I am using the word look here in a wider sense we already encountered looking how important it can be to look in the state of attention at a flower a tree or anything here I am using looking in a wider sense which is embracing it with your attention which is a field of stillness and there that

is the current of awareness so to speak that flows through you onto the situation which may involve a person or several people so there is that intelligence comes into play in that situation the unmanifested intelligence not reactive not analytical not trying to work out what can I do to change this situation or even trying to work out what can I do to help these people a greater help comes when you enter that consciousness and then suddenly perhaps words come or suddenly action arises not perhaps even from within you it may come from somebody out there you are the bringer of space so to speak space consciousness the spaciousness of presence so it is an enormous thing to realize what power there lies in pure attention pure looking beyond just visual looking even a blind person can look in that sense which is simply placing awareness embracing it one could say with awareness which implies allowing it to be as it is at this moment because it already is and that becomes the basis then for change so that's the most powerful thing in yourself is to discover that still power that never fights anything or anybody but embraces everything and everybody and yet is also the most powerful agent of change also transforms the outer so it becomes a more benign place less hell it approaches heaven a little bit more certain polarities will remain in the outer realm they keep the outer going hot cold high low but they are benign polarities they are to be enjoyed as the multiplicity of the phenomenal universe to be enjoyed the multiple forms so life can appear in so many forms so this is so simple and this is perhaps why it's remained a secret for so long take this consciousness anywhere and you immediately become a healer and again I'm using the word in a wider sense that whatever enters that field of spacious presence becomes transformed and if it is not ready to be transformed will remove itself it's not ready yet and that's fine too people will come to you now as this is arising from within you more strongly many of you will find and many of you are already finding that people come to you and they don't know why and they ask a question you might meet people seemingly accidentally maybe in an elevator or anywhere and something that you say or they ask there's something there they are seeking something from you something within them can sense something that there is something there they don't know what it is so people will be drawn to you and there's the temptation there's the possibility that your mind will re-enter the stage and say I've got to do something might say I've got to help this person how can I help this person that's a natural temptation to come when people come for help to try to figure out how to help and a far more effective help is available when you become comfortable with that state the simple state of presence in which it seems that you don't know anything there's simply a being there simply a listening an open field of attention the person may be speaking and there's an open field of attention that is a very fine energy vibration that is intelligence out of that intelligence whatever is needed comes through words realizations action insights sudden insights or simply sometimes the arising of peace in the other person and so that is the greatest transformative agent it's the frequency of awareness and so the mind then takes secondary place it steps back and it becomes the servant so to speak thought still operates sometimes when a realization comes it may need to be expressed in words so it becomes a thought and that thought becomes the words that's

beautiful then the mind works beautifully it doesn't take over it may try again because it's been running the show for so long but then it subsides you have to because many of you live in have one foot in the new consciousness one foot in the old it can still happen that mind takes over it happens even to great spiritual teachers it can happen that mind comes back in identification with me as special comes back if for years if for ten years everybody tells me I'm special because they confuse the essence with the form if for ten years people tell me that I am special then maybe if I don't meet especially if I live in an ashram never meet anybody else who doesn't tell me I'm special eventually I am special I must be everybody's telling me enlightenment is nobody's possession or attainment it is simply there in the absence of the density of a mind identified sense of self in the absence of that density the condition the state of enlightenment is there it's always been there even before the sun just shines through now and the sun could become obscured again because it's nobody's possession nobody says I am in possession of the state of enlightenment now who are you?

it's in the absence of you that it's there the absence of the mind made you so the mind may come in and want to run the show again and then at some point you will notice it this may this state of consciousness it's important to when you talk to people even in situations that involve no that are not problematic casual conversation even there the mind can easily take over and you lose the spaciousness in any human interaction the decisive factor only real important question in any human interaction is is there space or is there complete or is the entire interaction dominated by object consciousness which means is the entire interaction dominated by the activity of thought and you can see how you get drawn into that it's the mind the mind stream taking over no space left it's full it's like living cramped in a room cramped full with things and then comes the next thing and then the next because when you're in a mind stream one thing leads to the next one thought leads to the next and there's no end and some people many people even when they are alone it happens to them and then they get exhausted after a while because it burns up so much energy that and then they look for somebody else to talk to and in any interaction so you can observe is there space or has space been lost now space can never really be lost but there's complete unawareness of space which means there's no awareness of awareness there's only awareness of things there's only awareness of thoughts but awareness has become the thought identification with thought awareness has been born into thought forms consciousness has taken birth and is taking birth continuously as thought forms a continuous stream like you know when some some life forms give birth in rapid some fishes that come out of when I was a child I had an aquarium and I could sometimes see a fish giving birth the fish would just come out of the mother fish this is the universe giving birth to form and this happens on the level of thought the consciousness the one consciousness giving birth to form is born into form one after another rebirth rebirth rebirth and you are in each rebirth there is me complete identification with the form the thought form that is rebirth that is you're condemned to be reborn it's not some abstract buddhist theory rebirth rebirth is a

concrete thing happening at this moment into the next thought form and the next and the end of rebirth is not some abstract buddhist notion that says you need another two hundred incarnations approximately to come to the end of rebirth the end of rebirth is the possibility for that is here now not to be reborn into the next thought and then suddenly space is there a little bit of space around the thought watch people interacting or even better watch yourself interacting and see are you there as a thought form perhaps wedded to an emotion that goes with it particularly if you're trying to be right or reacting to something the person said or reacting to a place or situation and so how much space is there in you any? even that question can be helpful because that question is a little pointer the question of course is still a thought but it's pointing beyond itself how much space is there is there any space in me at this moment and when you ask that question you come to the end of thought because to know whether there's any space in you which is the space of awareness which is the space of no thought that very question is there any space in me at this moment that question in order to answer it you need to listen, watch and be alert and attentive to find out whether there's any space in you and that is the space that's why the question can take you there to answer it the space needs to be there is there any space in me this is a similar question to the question we asked yesterday is it still now now these are beautiful questions because to answer them you can't think to answer them there's no answer in thought if there's an answer in thought it's a mistake it's wrong if you give that answer to a Zen master he'll hit you so that's a beautiful little thing and in any interaction if you simply remember that question and then you will notice stopping for a moment because you have to find out and so you can learn to interact noticing the mind stream you will notice it more often when you're being dragged along in a mind stream and then you're out spaciousness is there and it's good if you can when you speak to people one can be aware that you've said what you had to say the statement has come to an end and then you can step back into spaciousness from there that's a beautiful thing to do you've said you've given your opinion what do you think of such and such

[Speaker 7] (2:50:51 - 2:50:51)

well

[Speaker 1] (2:50:51 - 2:50:56)

what do you think of political situation

[Speaker 7] (2:50:56 - 2:50:56)

well

[Speaker 1] (2:50:57 - 3:19:02)

I think it's like this like that I think he's right I think he's wrong I think he's great I think

he's mad there's the mental position and you've said it and then you step back into spaciousness okay you've said what you had to say you can still have mental positions your sense of self is in the space not in the mental position and then if he says I disagree with you totally he's not mad he's doing the right thing there's that's another viewpoint you can still defend yours you can say I still think you're wrong because this and this and this without the self defending itself and then you're already creating an enemy there the person who's disagreeing with you becomes your enemy because he's attacking your sense of self that is madness it's very normal and it's mad so you can play around with mental positions you don't need to give them up you may have favorite positions I'm a republican I'm a democrat why not?

or whatever it's fine and your position maybe is more right than somebody else's who knows it may well be history will show that either he's mad or he's doing the right thing so not to become trapped in in mind forms because you are part of the madness even if you say that he's mad and you get mad because somebody else disagrees with your viewpoint you're part of the madness anybody in whom space consciousness is not arising is really part of the problem and then you see certain things of course from space consciousness insights are there you can see quite deeply into things and there's compassion in the seeing even if you see somebody's doing a mad thing there's compassion in there in that and again compassion is not weak compassion is an aspect of the unconditioned it arises out of that I suggest between now and the next afternoon meeting we keep noble silence perhaps even beyond we'll see between now and this afternoon a space of silence in which you are alone with your mind and be compassionate with your mind accept it be aware of all the many little things as you walk walking around and aware of the field in which this is arising which is you this is what we've been waiting for you often hear of the term renunciation in spiritual contexts and the question arises what do I need to renounce do we need to renounce the world and traditionally in all spiritual traditions renunciation in one way or another has been practiced renunciation of food reducing it to a minimum renunciation of sexuality renunciation of possessions personal relationships in most of these cases what the most fundamental renunciation has been forgotten and that is why in most of these cases renunciation hasn't quite worked and that's the most fundamental renunciation once that's been renounced the rest doesn't matter and that's to renounce time and more specifically future because all those who have renounced other things use their renunciation as a means towards an end a future state to be achieved an enhanced version of myself hoping that through different ways of renouncing I can get to that to renounce the future is really the only true renunciation and that is to renounce the next moment what does that mean? to recognize this moment as the central core of your life this moment not to make it inferior to a projected future moment in your mind simply by giving full attention to this moment and always realize the how fundamental this is you automatically renounce investment in future seeking something in or through future that's a continuous beautiful practice at first then it's a way of being of living always a

continuous return until you dwell in the now you can still deal with future as part of your practical life making appointments plans for timetable when it's needed without losing yourself in mental projections I could plan where I'm traveling next year now I have to so look at the calendar it's still the present moment if I project myself mentally to the next event in a year's time then either some desire or fear will arise some desire that that event is finally going to make it make me I'm finally through it going to achieve an enhanced me or fear arises if we meet again next year and I project myself to that I might be fearful say will I have anything more to say when we meet again what am I going to say to them then what I've said it all and then they'll be dissatisfied they will go home and so the practice is simply to return to the simplicity of now and always stepping out of mind and the conceptualized story and identity that wants all your attention that includes simple things when you're traveling home from here which you're not at this moment not projecting yourself into the situation that you're going to encounter at home but be there in the car or the plane this moment don't miss this can be very beautiful too when you when your attention is there the simplicity of this moment you deal with it your problematic situation whose situation is not problematic when you get to it and the problematic situation is not that problematic when you deal with it whatever challenge there may be in this moment when you get there then you look look look attention what is it that this moment requires then action comes or no action Zen has even been defined once by a master as doing one thing at a time another beautiful the famous story of Zen when the disciple comes to the master and says a disciple of somebody some other master no how does it go no the disciple goes to the master and says they met somebody else another master they said who can walk on water so they asked him what can you do that or can you do things like that or what can you do and then of course the master comes up with a famous Zen and it's now become a famous Zen saying when I'm hungry I eat when I'm tired I sleep and one other related Zen saying is when you stand just stand when you sit just sit and above all don't wobble don't move it's an amazing thing to do something completely just this honoring this truly honoring it is honoring life this whatever this whatever form this may take and it's a we'll come to questions in a minute I'll stop in a minute questions if there are any left so it's a stepping out of the conceptualized universe in the head with its past and future into this stepping out of that abstraction making yourself into a mental abstraction making your life into a mental abstraction and carrying what ultimately is a burden a great burden of mental abstraction never that never feels it has completed itself it always feels something important is missing in this abstraction of me but what is it how can I find that missing piece in that abstract abstract version of me you don't know when you're identified with it you don't know it's an abstract version of me you think it's me it is me how can I find that which completes me and then you look and this is the search everybody search on a material level or whatever level search for me through something or other and on that level completion is never reached it always feels incomplete the me the conceptual me sometimes you think it's complete now and then something falls out of it again a big chunk that held it all together falls out life does that and again it feels

incomplete not to be absorbed in that abstraction that conceptualized self and the only way to leave it is to enter now that breaks the continuity between past and future the continuity if it's not broken the future will be very similar to the past slightly different forms but basically the same old thing even the future of mankind would not change technology yes changes superficial changes but basically the same warfare conflict I don't unless a shift happens here so the razor's edge of now that's where you walk and then you feel the pull of past and future which is a mental pull which is the pull of thought because past and future you can only encounter through thought not as an actuality ever so you feel the pull of past and future which is the pull of thought wanting all your attention again conceptualized self that lives in and through past and future you feel and sometimes you wobble or more than that you get lost in it again and then you notice it return to the now this becomes then a new way to live to walk on this razor's edge the whole world becomes transformed through that and even the complexity of your life situation loses its harshness becomes softer loses its overriding importance that's the sense that this matters so much to me how this event turns out whether I get this or not anything it matters so much the heaviness and seriousness of things so serious if there's nothing else that entire identity is in that then it becomes life is such a serious business and with the now comes the space and with that comes a lightness and a point then comes when nothing is ever that serious even death is never is no longer that serious and it's only then that you can truly care for the things of this world including other human beings that quality that we call care can only be there when there is presence is awareness now awareness it is inseparable from care whatever your attention shines upon always that that attention that is awareness that current of awareness contains that element of care loving care one could say that flows to whatever attention moves to it it might be a human being it might be a situation and that is care it is not care care has another meaning in the English language the cares of the world there's a care can be a heaviness too but this is loving care love care even for the world of objects when you relate because when you speak of relationships and think exclusively of relationships as relationships to other human being but equally important as relationships to nature very important for human humanity how humanity relates to nature if humanity does not find a right relationship to nature it's the end of humanity so to find a right relationship to nature and even a right relationship to the world of things to have a relationship to an object that you pick up and if there's an attention there there's a certain care if there's no attention all objects in your life are means to an end nature becomes a means to an end and you just begin to destroy it you don't see it you don't know what you're doing then because all you see is a means to an end what can this do for me how much is this forest worth what can we do with it its future using it and then you don't see the forest as it is which is a sacred space because you're not in touch with that dimension within yourself the space within how can you see the sacred space in the forest all you see is a commodity through the mind it becomes you are trapped in object consciousness so you bring that to the forest and all you see in the forest is the object in the forest three trunks you measure them and then you know how much it's

worth so truly the destruction of nature that humans are engaged in truly the words of Jesus apply forgive them for they know not what they do they truly don't know what they do the space isn't there to know it and that's why that transformation of consciousness where you realize the essence of consciousness and the essence of yourself to be space why that is so vital otherwise no change true change is possible I'll start with one or two questions that people have given me on a piece of paper and then we'll go on and ask questions here if there should be any whether there'll be answers I don't know maybe and I love Ramana Maharshi the Indian teacher who very often would not give answers to questions so person came asked a question perhaps had prepared it for a long time and this is a very important question and asked the question and he just sat there it's like the question falling into a void and sometimes the the ego of the questioner didn't like that and felt offended is my question not important enough to merit an answer but at other times it happened that space arose in the questioner sitting in that spaciousness that came through him and then the question disappeared in it or spontaneous answer arose in the questioner's mind out of the space

[Speaker 7] (3:19:02 - 3:19:03)

and

[Speaker 1] (3:19:04 - 3:40:07)

usually I didn't know it was that simple I have been diagnosed with a so-called incurable though not fatal virus how can I improve my health without using the modalities as a means to an end thank you this may be an important question for a few quite a few of you disease fatal or non-fatal those are just perhaps concepts or beliefs attached to conditions it's very easy for a so-called disease to immediately become another concept in the mind especially a so-called serious disease can very easily become a concept in your mind and becomes incorporated into your sense of who you are you are someone this is happens very easily you can also if you have observed humans you may have observed that some humans for some humans who have had a disease for a long time their disease becomes almost the central part of their sense of self I know once overheard a conversation in a bus a woman talking to her friend there was pride in her voice when she talked about the important doctor who was going to perform the operation for the third time on her the next day or the day after there was that sense in that egoic sense of self that is always looking for more to enhance itself it can easily happen that it uses a condition such as an illness in order to gain more attention in order to gain a deeper sense of self because this sense of self is always deficient so then I am a such and such sufferer and when I speak of surrender which means acceptance of what is I'm not speaking of acceptance of an illness or acceptance of yourself as someone who has an illness that would be strengthening the mind made sense of self and strengthening the concept of illness acceptance applies only to this moment not to some situation in your life only this and whatever may manifest at this moment as an

illness could be part disability or discomfort or weakness and this condition of this moment is as it is at this moment and that is what you bring acceptance to what you and with that space arises when there is acute pain that is not easy acute pain seems to fill up the entire space of your being but what else can you do except allow it to be there because it is there and it has happened in quite a few cases that pain burned up the conceptualized structures of your mind pain burned up the ego became a fire in which the egoic sense of self became consumed and for a few people this is what happens there may also be disability in movement or you may have an illness that you simply know you are ill but there may not even be any particularly serious symptoms you just know that there is that whatever it is the question is important not to make it into a means to an end which is the practice of accepting the isness of now in whatever form not in order to achieve something in order to get better but then it's not complete acceptance but surrender to this let the illness force you into the present moment that is a beautiful thing then the illness becomes the teacher it forces you into and particularly if it is a fatal illness so called it may not be and of course in a wider sense each one of us has a fatal illness of course it's called mortality an extremely dangerous virus and it's just a question of time before it hits and even knowing the fact of the mortality of your physical could be of the same purpose if you could remember it every day as they did in medieval times some people they had a skull on their desk to remind them of mortality so whenever you sit there you look at that but an illness or in Buddhist countries they Buddhist monks in certain Buddhist countries regularly visit the morgue so they are let in and then they sit where the dead bodies are and they sit there for a few hours that forces you into the now that's an amazing thing don't try to do it here they'll think there's something very wrong with you the illness allow whatever the condition is to force you into the now the illness becomes unhappiness the illness becomes an unhappy self when you leave the now then it really then it becomes a me who is ill who has an illness who is an ill person and particularly if you've been told by the doctor that you only have a limited amount of time to live whatever he may have said one year six months this is perhaps the worst thing that in the normal state of consciousness that could happen to anybody you go to the doctor and you say I'm sorry maybe six to twelve months he's basically telling you that there's no future for you you have no more future if this doesn't force you into the now well and it's happened I've met people who are in that condition and it's an enormous accelerated transformation has been happening inside them they are on an accelerated course of realization because ultimately none of us has that much time left it doesn't it seems it may seem still you might think oh well thirty years I haven't probably twenty years forty years maybe I even have fifty years left it seems a long time but time is a strange thing it's very fleeting and before you know it you're faced with very little left was that it?

I've been waiting for it to start and now it's come to an end being forced into now by some condition an illness can do that if used rightly and the amazing thing is that healing is much more likely to happen in that state of surrender to now acceptance

because there is an energy field there that is very healing that is space so there was a well known doctor who wrote a big book on healing and the modalities of healing and he came to the conclusion by in research and talking to people that in most cases where healing happened it happened when there was acceptance and miraculous healings have happened but this is not why you accept and this is why the question is important if you're hoping for healing you're not yet totally here because in a deeper sense when there is complete alignment with the suchness of this moment you're healed already in the deepest sense so it could be an illness that forces you into the now it could be some other unpleasant condition such as being in a prison cell that forces you into the now any condition that in the normal state of consciousness would lead to a very miserable sense of self any such condition can force you into that it could even be somebody close to you going through extreme suffering such as illness or somebody very close to you being in prison being condemned for a crime being some form of madness somebody very close to you and perhaps that person very close to you is not yet capable of surrender and is in extreme suffering and then you could easily you could be drawn into suffering yourself and again here again you can allow such a situation of suffering in your immediate vicinity so to speak that is happening to somebody who is very close to you and he or she cannot yet see the possibility of acceptance so you do it for them and that also often produces miracles but that's a byproduct you surrender for them if they cannot surrender whether it be your child or grown up child who is involved in some madness whether it be your parent or your partner somebody close to you having a serious illness why can't they they can't they are not perhaps ready yet you surrender give them space let that force you into the now because if you leave the now you suffer the moment you leave the now it becomes very painful it becomes conceptual painful conceptual reality I spoke to a couple last year whose son has been condemned for a serious crime that is great suffering he may not yet be able to surrender but you can surrender for him my friend Satyam Nadin who was in prison for a few years reports reports after having spent quite a long period in the worst prison in the United States probably overcrowded overheated violent you never even knew whether you would reach the next day because people even got killed in there very miserable life situation especially after having had wealth and luxuries and there you are in hell and he was miserable his whole life had collapsed his child taken away the threat of being put away in an orphanage he didn't know whether it would happen or not his possessions taken away and there he is in hell in Florida a little window no air conditioning ghetto blasters playing loud heavy metal day and night this takes you to the limit the limit of suffering this is one way and suddenly a point came when there was a letting go of resistance because resistance was futile you can resist the pain becomes unbearable the pain that is resistance that is a non-acceptance and finally this is as it is it just is just this and what collapsed were the conceptual structures of the self just this and suddenly there was peace in the midst of hell in the midst of all that uncertainty what's going to happen to me and what is happening to me it happened just like that by being taken to the limit so what is called can sometimes be called a limit situation if you should encounter a limit situation if

you're not yet totally in present moment awareness now then that will just give you the final push life knows what you need and if you should not need that you'll probably get it you may not need it anymore because we're doing it here it's only those you need it who get it life is not absurd it only looks like that on the surface let's see if there are any other questions but before we do I just mention certain questions are more helpful than others and those are questions concerning yourself perhaps someone close to you your situation less helpful questions are questions that are mental or abstract such as what was the Buddha's incarnation on the planet Mars or I need to know this or questions such as your teaching does not conform to the standards of Advaita Vedanta school of philosophy and the discrepancies are as follows you say there is a doer but Advaita says there is no doer I need to know

[Speaker 2] (3:40:15 - 3:40:42)

I work as a career counselor I have difficulty reconciling the need to meet one's inner purpose and the need to motivate people to meet their outer purpose using their unique talents their skills so for me there is maybe a conflict or the reconciling is difficult for me to grasp yes

[Speaker 1] (3:40:45 - 3:40:55)

uniting the inner purpose with the outer purpose do you feel that has happened in your life the inner and outer

[Speaker 2] (3:40:55 - 3:41:00)

up to now I've been more concerned with the outer purpose

[Speaker 1] (3:41:03 - 3:41:11)

but I presume you are bringing consciousness presence awareness when you work with people when you counsel them

[Speaker 2] (3:41:11 - 3:41:23)

I really care about them reaching harmony with who they are and what they do

[Speaker 1] (3:41:23 - 3:51:22)

yes thank you let's see what answer emerges whatever you do in life it's not so much a question of what you do but what let's see to put it in the most simple terms it's not so much a question of what you do but how you do what you do so to guide people into finding out what it is that they need to do not putting the focus in your case because you guide them you counsel them not putting the focus on the what what is it that I can do for this person what is it that this person is supposed to do what am I supposed to say really not to put the focus on what kind of help am I supposed to give this person but to

put the primary focus on your own state of consciousness as you sit with another human being so not to question the what but to make sure that the primary condition is met and that is in the presence of another person you are in the state of presence out of that state and this is why this is important having come to our retreat here because that's the only teaching here to embody the state of presence when you are sitting with another person is primary anything else that comes is secondary and anything else that comes any advice realizations insights or any knowing or knowledge that comes will come out of that state what to say how to help or enabling that person to find the answers for him or herself which is even better than answers coming from you enabling that person to go within and find what it is that would be right for them that is your task there and to be able to fulfill that task I cannot tell you it would be futile for me to tell you what to say to this person because that to be alive and truly an expression of the one intelligence needs to come out of the space of that moment what it is and if you bring that space and you have been learning it here very often you will notice a shift and a spaciousness arising in the person that you are sitting with so that is primary then out of that the realization the insight may come what it is that they need to do what is right for them it may come from you too it may come as a guiding question that you suddenly find yourself asking so you explore but it is not you don't you no longer have the structure of meeting these people will become less and less important to you so you may if you have a list of things that you ask you may use them less or spontaneous questions may arise from within you that are not on your list of questions that you usually ask that person because they are right for that moment so it is beautiful to help a person find what is right for them to do but more important than that is to help a person find their more essential being and your presence is part of that so bring that go into and this applies not just to you there are many people here who are working with other humans doing some kind of counseling this may be a little frightening at first but the most powerful help you can give is to dwell to allow yourself to dwell in the state of not knowing while you sit with someone and then allow the more vital knowing to come out of that either through you or the other person or even as some external factor and this is not easy it's a shift it's like jumping off a cliff you get to the edge and because you go into the region of not knowing anymore there's an instinctive withdrawing from that anybody who has gone into speaking to a group of people with prepared scripts knows how frightening it would be if you suddenly lost your script and what are you going to say and it's happened sometimes to people who know of one case a man who was supposed to give a talk and he was in a hurry in his hotel room and he got a folder and when he opened it up and he arrived it was something total it wasn't his speech at all and there were all these people waiting and he had to say I'm sorry I haven't got my script here and so there was a moment of panic and he was and suddenly he gave the best speech he had ever given subsequently he didn't use scripts anymore so not to have another word is an agenda even as it's me and this is because you're in a helping profession it's not easy to step out of the mental concept of me I have to help this person somehow I have to be of help to do something to help this person see how powerful it is to go into that state of

not knowing and be comfortable with that with not knowing that is just amazing just sitting there first you listen the other person is speaking then some questions may come so allow it to arise out of that then you will be doing more than career counseling then career counseling will be the excuse for your spiritual work and that by the way applies to any job you do as you bring consciousness to it whatever external activity you may become be engaged in is no longer the overriding concern the overriding concern is the state of consciousness that you bring to it that the activity becomes secondary and is a kind of it's dressed up in that form it's only the form so there's the form of your activity and there's the essence of your activity and so it could happen that the form is not very conducive to embodying essence that's rare you might be working in a noisy discotheque and you there may be an easier way to embody presence but if you can't get out of it maybe they've shut you in there it was the case in the prison then you do it there you may be working in some slaughtering animals probably you would remove yourself but in most cases the external form is secondary when the transformation of consciousness happened as it is happening in you now the form may remain the external form of your activity or it may change if it remains this added dimension will flow into it and it will become secondary if the form has been unsatisfying if you thought I'm only a waiter I'm only this or I'm only that then suddenly presence will flow into what you do and you're no longer only that it's only an excuse and very often change then comes by itself it's beautiful

[Speaker 4] (3:51:31 - 3:53:06)

you spoke earlier about living without relying on thought and gave us a couple of examples remaining seated until we find ourselves standing up and then we would know it was time to stand up or being in an oppressive organization and without going through a decision making process awakening one morning and realizing this is it I wonder about the place of planning a course of activities designed to produce some set of forms in the future particularly when they require coordinating the activities of many people making a movie for example I think I understand the seductiveness of thinking that making that movie will in some way enhance the self my career has been helping organizations to create visions and goals and plans to bring certain configurations of form into being and you mentioned well okay in the course of daily events you need to plan appointments and such but if our future is to live without reliance on thought how do we coordinate activities designed to move into the future without relying on thought or am I leading people in the wrong direction thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (3:53:11 - 3:58:39)

using thought but not relying on thought that is the way one can live using thought for certain activities many activities thought will come in at some point even here the words would not come out of this mouth if they were not thought then becoming speech so even here thought plays a role as a function that which is being spoken comes out of

presence so thought is linked to that dimension so for example you mentioned film making and that kind of thing involves people who coordinate that kind of thing it involves hundreds of people things that need to be dealt with spoken to coordinated and you might think you need a lot of thought for that for many of these things if you watch any master let's even a master filmmaker you may find that as they are engaged fully engaged in their work a large part of that what they do is a spontaneous arising a director for example a good director who watches is in that he may not be in the rest of his life or her life but in that field of his activity if he is a master or she is a master that director is in that state of alertness when engaged in giving instructions telling people what to do how does he know what is right the master doesn't know it thought plays a tiny part in that the master knows what is right and then gives it then it becomes words speech and then he will say it it arises anybody who has achieved mastery in any field if you observe how they work you will see that a large part of their work does not come from thought and all the creative element is not thought the rest may involve thought so those things that do involve that is maybe an aspect that is non creative perhaps when the director gets home to his office there is some paperwork to deal with he may need to dictate a letter but even there where does it is amazing when you live in that inner state of alignment it is not that thought doesn't operate anymore you use it even that isn't right you don't use it I don't use thought there is no planning you might have noticed here and each time I come here yesterday for example as I was coming here I thought it's questions today that's good because I have nothing more to say and then words came and there were no questions it's not so much that thought doesn't operate anymore but thought becomes the servant of something deeper you don't lose yourself in that because if you lose yourself in that let's say in film making for example then you become a director who people fear who perhaps a lot of the time is angry and because things are not going the way they should and or a director who is trying to figure out what the best way is to how to what can I do now that's the difference between a master and somebody who is just doing his or her job and so it's a new way to live get to it's more sensing and feeling how that works rather than trying to understand what function thought is going to have planning isn't part that everybody needs to do and there's no reason why you should lose yourself in thought or future by doing any planning you simply give attention to this to the calendar the drawing board the computer screen what it is what is it that this requires

[Speaker 4] (3:58:40 - 3:58:57)

when I stood up I think I was ready to argue in favor of that we need to rely on the thought form of our schedules at least and I've realized as you were speaking that one of the things that I may be able to do with the people the organizations with whom I work is to help them have a different relationship to those schedules

[Speaker 1] (3:58:57 - 4:04:54)

that's right yes the schedules are mind forms that's right it's a it's just a wonderful way you cannot learn it the other way around it's always strange when people come and observe those who have mastery in their area and then try to observe the externals what they do and then try to make it into a system so you approach it from that end and that is not quite it although sometimes if you go through the right movements that can also get you there for example I'm nobody knows this but I sense that this is true this is what I sense you're all familiar with Tai Chi things like that Qi Gong Tai Chi for example which is slow movement beautiful practice to do it well you need to be present with every movement no movement is a means to an end you're not trying to get to this place because you're at this place and you're moving completely at each place no not one second is a means to an end otherwise you're not good at it and how did that happen how did anybody ever come up with that I'm sure it happened because someone who lived in that state spontaneously began to move and perform a very slow dance as a joyful expression external expression of that state and then somebody came and said what's he doing and then people gathered around him it feels so good to just watch this and after a little while somebody clever came with a piece of paper and said now he's lifting his left arm now the right leg is going up and then he began to teach it wasn't quite but fortunately in the case of tai chi because that movement forces you back into that state so to some extent it can still work then they did it to psychotherapists there were three effective psychotherapists who were so good like everybody all the patients were cured or whatever they wanted to call it and finally somebody came and said how do they work let's observe how they work now their eyes go up this way now they are in the same body posture as the patient and if they asked the therapist they didn't know they were doing it it just happened because there was so much alignment with the person that sometimes when the patient sat like this the therapist would go like but it was spontaneous spontaneous becoming one and then it became a system it loses something of course but even that can be helpful it's no longer it doesn't arise out of the core of being but even that can be helpful but let's really go to the core and see where the core of mastery lies and that you can live not just in the performance of your professional activities but live in that state when you're going about relatively insignificant doing relatively so called insignificant things in your life traveling from here to there not doing anything in particular interaction with other humans be there so it's a beautiful challenge to bring that presence into whatever situation you're in and then see that yes thought is still there and yet it has lost its overriding its primary position a deeper intelligence is informing thought and then it operates and then you don't one characteristic of any action that's being performed is that you're not reducing it to something inferior to where you want to get and that is what the Bhagavad Gita calls but really it is when whatever you do is not a means to an end but your attention is fully in the doing that is karma yoga consecrated action you could call it not inferior to some thought of future achievement and then that's thank you and that's mastery okay yes do we have another microphone okay so we can shift one side then that side and then that side

[Speaker 2] (4:04:57 - 4:04:58)

my turn okay

[Speaker 3] (4:05:00 - 4:06:53)

hello my question is about children um my son who's 13 is here with me this week because an exception was made to allow him to come and uh we went through a lot of suffering and um I was listening to your tapes in the car and one day my son said don't take that out mom I need that that pain body thing makes sense to me and that was his beginning of a journey into embracing this work and he's watched a lot of videos he's been to some support groups um where he's the only kid and he's now helping me run a presence group and so far he's the only kid but I would love to know what your thoughts are I guess your knowing is about how we can bring this and offer it to children um because I see in him what a beautiful um really special group for children um maybe some of the teenage kids whose parents have come to the adult presence group and I've talked with a number of other people here at meals and in the informal gatherings about groups and I noticed some other people had an interest but I haven't yet met anyone who's led a group for kids particularly except to use it in you know they're working with kids in whatever way they work with kids if they do whether it's athletics or teaching

[Speaker 1] (4:06:53 - 4:15:09)

good thank you well perhaps this gathering is the beginning of a few groups like that starting and maybe you have planted the seed for that here but I do know that more and more people who work with children are bringing this into their work school teachers people who work with younger children some psychotherapists who work with children are bringing it in a few people are working on books written for children to embody their teaching and quite a few children I hear from people are exposed to the tapes a lot of the time and some of them have gone through a shift because the tapes whatever the teaching is so simple that of course children can understand it sometimes better than adults and I've had reports of children who've gone through an enormous shift simply have been exposed to that whenever they are driving their mother is driving they have to listen to this tape I know of one mother who her child she had to listen to it all the time and then for the first time she got a video and so her child said oh mum is that power of now the movie so it is the answer to your question is already in this room it doesn't need to come it's already in a few people in this room the answer to your question is already in you it will emerge what it is that you need to do perhaps even one child of course but comes into contact with other children and a child who already experiences that transformation will affect other children naturally whether or not in your case there's going to be a more formal structure where you meet with children or children meet your son meets with children the answer doesn't come from me but will come from you and it'll come as an insight into what it is and this is a beautiful thing

when what is right will come as an answer from within you some people are writing books I've already seen one or two books that seem to embody some aspect of the teachings such as pain body a book I saw that was written in French and somebody sent me the Italian translation of it was a book of drawings that shows a little child getting home and experiencing a pain body attack it's not called pain body it's all pictorial the pain body is seen as a monster in his belly and then that monster comes out of his mouth and he's shouting and screaming and going to his room and there's this big monster energy looks menacing but yet also benign at the same time filling his whole room and going berserk in his room throwing everything and finally the monster subsides so it's a child reads that and recognizes something in him or herself that is there as a pictorial symbol and by recognizing it finding a space between that and the other space is already there through seeing it out there so many of you especially those who work with children or who have children you're already doing it if there's teachers some teachers already when they tell me what the beautiful things that happen in the classrooms as they bring that in and how children respond and ask relevant questions how children become there's one child who has been forced to listen to the tape through her mother who's become her teacher who's been saying the most amazing wise things and that dimension in many children is not yet as hidden obscured by mind stuff as it is in some adults so they respond more quickly so it is enough that you embody that and that is spreading to your children to your child and from there it will spread further go within and see if there is any more that you can do not you as a limited personal self but how that can come through you through whatever means writing organizing this or that but don't make it into a mental thing that thinks I need to do something ask the question and this is the beauty of true answers ask the question and then become still is there more is there anything else I can do let the question the question becomes like a pebble that you drop into a still lake the question then disappears in the stillness and then don't pursue that anymore just become still few days later ask the question again whether there is more to do become still and suddenly you know what to do and this is again it's arriving at decisions that are no longer decisions no longer relying also on some external answer this is really I'm not answering your question in concrete terms because the answer the true answer of what it is right for you to do will come from within you and it will unfold from there but don't forget it's unfolding already so it's simply a further unfolding of what's happening and when it's so grateful for what's happened and is happening already when you see it you cannot not be grateful for what the change that is already happening has already happened and out of that state of gratefulness it grows more that's the beauty of it

[Speaker 3] (4:15:11 - 4:15:14)

thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (4:15:14 - 4:15:18)

I don't know whose town it is now

[Speaker 2] (4:15:20 - 4:15:21)

I've been

[Speaker 7] (4:15:21 - 4:15:22)

waiting for many many months

[Speaker 2] (4:15:22 - 4:16:21)

to get here and ask something about it actually my original question has changed since I've been here but it still relates to the same thing which is this pain body which reminds me of the suffering that Gurdjieff talked about what happened that was a change is I've got a band sort of around my chest it seems that when there's any kind of release there's massive anger grief fear stuff like that that's held in place by some sort of strange band I've been to doctors this year they said there's nothing wrong with me my lungs are fine one of them said he thought it was emotional anyway yesterday as I was trying to climb up the hill that black dog that had been in here yesterday I couldn't breathe it was like I will never make it up and it was raining and I thought what am I going to do the black dog passed me he looked at me I looked at him and the second I noticed him I was surprised to see him there was no problem

[Speaker 7] (4:16:23 - 4:16:26)

laughter applause

[Speaker 2] (4:16:29 - 4:16:50)

and then I realized there was no problem so the problem came back laughter and actually my question at this point is if I physically try to push through this with exercise do you think I can maybe make some headway so that I can breathe again or laughter

[Speaker 1] (4:16:55 - 4:36:06)

do the exercise only if you truly enjoy it but not as a means to an end if you truly enjoy the exercise it's beautiful and it may do something but the enjoyment is that which makes it effective not an exercise because you think you should be doing it for some reason if without the enjoyment why do the exercise then that there is something this is mainly at now because there is presence in you this is on a feeling level semi-physical as far as I can see what you feel is physical emotional somehow where these two meet it could be an emotion it could be purely physical but you feel it very much here it's no longer so much associated with that there's a danger that the mind will make it and you've given really the the key already yourself the danger is the mind will make it into a problem of mine and try to solve it as a problem and then it becomes a dilemma I need

to get rid of this and it could take years or it may never happen if that is the case so it is here this is the when the dog was teaching you the dog taught because that's how dogs live to be completely with what is so for that for a moment you were completely with the suchness of that including that and that was a freeing it was liberating to see that there is no problem don't give it the heaviness that the mind will endow it with and make it into something that needs to be solved say yes to it it is appearing here at this moment make friends with it whatever comes into the space of now make friends with it because it is that is the most powerful healer because it is obviously an energy field there so it is life it has a particular form that form may have something to do with certain mind forms from your past so it has a the form is temporary life is eternal it has a particular vibrational frequency which is part of its form and that is something to do with certain thought forms partly personal but ultimately all collective from the human collective mind that created it and there's not really it's not a personal fault of yours at all that became created it's a temporary form and it's alive and it is as it is at this moment so the key to transformation to make friends with this moment what form it takes doesn't matter say yes to it allow it be with it oh that was the dog's teaching I'm just translating it into words and that that was the same dog we were coming in the golf cart that was running after us and I had a brief encounter with him too we looked at each other briefly it was beautiful beautiful moment and I knew that he knew we may have to carry on with questions if you can remember those of you who are waiting to ask if you can remember to come up this afternoon as the first people who come up it is now the clock the hands of this clock are pointing to the number twelve let's enjoy this beautiful day and this beautiful moment we may have more questions this afternoon in a little while not all questions perhaps can be asked or answered but you may have noticed from some of the questions that were asked earlier that very often concealed in the question the answer is already there the questioner really has already found the answer and just wants confirmation that that's right so often the answer is already hiding in the question you know it already you may not believe that you know it somehow i found a piece of paper in my pocket contains a question so we can start with that i'm just starting to follow the shambhala tibetan buddhist path do you think this is the right path it seems to have a lot of form but i'm drawn to the essential practice of kindness and enlightened society are all buddhist paths helpful daily practice in the formal sense if so how should i choose the tradition i will practice thank you well you've already chosen this one or it has chosen you for the time being the question of form is an interesting one in these very old traditions the form maybe quite heavy there's a lot of form that's what the questioner says forms of practice things to study perhaps so the form what about it if you practice one of those traditions at least with buddhism the formless essence usually still shines through in many cases but yes the form is heavy and the form could be a help or a hindrance three years ago we had a retreat in a buddhist place i arrived a day early and some of the people staying there buddhist practitioners were talking amongst themselves and i was listening and one person said he had that day just completed one thousand prostrations where the head goes to the floor he had a backache but he felt

good about it as he carried on talking i realized that in his case the form had become a hindrance because his belief was that he was accumulating some kind of merit improving his karma spiritual body building and this is a good example of the form becoming a hindrance he was getting bigger through the practice he felt superior to somebody else who hadn't managed those prostrations that I had to give up you could do those thousand prostrations also in a different way because prostration is a beautiful thing it is an act of surrender a symbolic almost one could say act of surrender so there could be that surrender there could be the letting go in each prostration instead of the accumulating through each prostration so there's the question then is not so much the form but how the form is used if you surrender maybe you don't need a thousand there's the story of a Sufi master Sufis are also very unconventional people sometimes Sufis to Islam is like Zen to Buddhism original Zen is breaking traditions and so the Sufi master everybody was prostrating themselves at the time of prayer and the Sufi master was just standing or sitting there and everybody was shocked and they asked him why don't you prostrate yourself he said I prostrated myself a long time ago and I never got up when you're in touch with the essence with the space within then the form you may use it you may not use it with these old traditions a lot depends often on who is the teacher whether the teacher is identified with the form mainly or whether the teacher has gone beyond form the teacher who only knows form can only teach you form the ability to know is there in you now to recognize whether this is just form or whether the essence is shining through in any formal practice that applies to other things too to other kinds of form you could go into a book shop spiritual book shop and pick up a book and open it read a few lines and you will know whether those words were written from presence space the deepest that that unconditioned consciousness or whether the words come from an intelligent knowledgeable mind able to rearrange accumulated information in a very readable format in that case the book may still convey useful information it will lack the power to transform which only those books have that came from that place and so as you develop that inner ability to recognize the essence you can save a lot of money by not having to buy books uselessly just save twenty dollars it's sometimes people find it strange they read a book that seems to don't quite have that ability to tell whether a book is spiritually empowered that's really what it is and so some books are so very intelligently written and the person who wrote them understands very well certain things between traditions and practices people with wonderful intellectual understanding and sometimes I've been told people when they finally go to a talk by that author that impressed them they are not impressed anymore because there's so much mind or even a prepared script so also when you go to a tradition go to the listen to the teacher who is teaching within that tradition listen from that deeper place and you'll know whether it's right for you or not well let's have some more questions if those people who were already standing before we finished could start please don't be disappointed if you don't get to ask your question it's not that important important but not that important maybe we could start on that side and then we go on to the middle and then to that side I was told that's the best thing to do at the

[Speaker 5] (4:36:18 - 4:37:08)

beginning of the book you wrote of the unfolding of the divine purpose of the universe and then near the end I did read the middle as soon as I found out I just wanted to find out who'd done it and then I went back to the middle near the end especially in the writing about possible mass destruction you wrote about universal laws and then this morning you used the phrase life knows what you need so what I wondered is what do these words mean in the moment to moment living and this tiptoes in the direction of course of determinism and free will so I'd be interested in your comment

[Speaker 1] (4:37:08 - 4:37:12)

oh yes could you just repeat the last statement which I didn't

[Speaker 5] (4:37:12 - 4:37:20)

hear for me these three questions tiptoe in the direction of the discussion of determinism and free will

[Speaker 1] (4:37:20 - 4:52:39)

oh yes yes yes thank you thank you determinism and free will of course are both concepts and they are both true and untrue they are simply different perspectives and different ways at looking at reality the mind doesn't like that it says this cannot be either one or the other must be true they are simply two different viewpoints it's a bit similar to is it a wave movement or is it a particle it depends how you look at it so on a practical level on a mental level the mind would like to know whether everything is predetermined or whether there is free choice on a practical level there is this moment the form that this moment takes and that and that applies both within and without this moment the form it takes may be a thought the form that this moment takes may be an emotion an external event may be the form that this moment takes may be an emotion the form that this takes an emotion the form moment takes may be an emotion that this moment takes may be an emotion that you can choose and you are meant to feel that that is part of the the way in which the universe is organized the sense that you are able to make a choice at this moment you can say I'm going to lift my right hand I can choose either to lift it or not lift it and I'm choosing to lift it you can say this is a clear demonstration that I have choice and yet where did that initial thought come from why did suddenly the words or the thoughts appear in my mind that I can lift my right hand where did that come from so you need to see whatever it is that arises at this moment always couldn't be otherwise and that includes your ability to choose in reality when you think you are choosing and it's good that you feel that you are choosing that is how the universe operates on the deepest level there is no you who is choosing anything because you are not separate from the totality there is only the appearance of separation because you have this temporary physical form but you are continuously connected to everything else

you are continuously connected to the sun to the earth to the air everything is flowing in and out of you on a subatomic level and it's mostly floating space what appears to be a solid person connected to everything else the very heat in your body is the sun and all kinds of influences coming together in one there is one temporary focal point where all these things meet temporarily the totality meets in this focal point and that focal point of consciousness for a little while thinks that's me a person so it's just it's a focal point in the vastness of the whole there's a little flash of light where many things come together in this beautiful and then it transforms itself again into something else but for a while it is a person from one perspective and that person is meant to be a person at that moment and meant to be deluded otherwise that person wouldn't be deluded it is that also is part of the totality and it is good for that person to believe I have choice in reality the totality is acting through me even when I say I'm going to raise my right arm who is deciding it's everything maybe the sun is part of that decision that is the heat in my body and intelligence too and maybe the sun is deciding is taking part in that decision that this arm is going to go up and innumerable other factors and perhaps as this arm is going up synchronistically and simultaneously in other parts of the universe other things are going up and on other dimensions who knows so of course there is no no separate entity with a separate will ultimately and yet there is humans operate in such a way and the sense that I can choose is part of this form the very sense is form identity that I can choose and that is fine this is why I say the most important and the only true choice is you can choose presence that's the fundamental choice but who is choosing that moment of realization I can choose to be present right now is the emergence of presence here through this opening and when as presence emerges at this moment I this so called entity believes it's choosing something and that's good it's even helpful to see that yes I can choose if presence were not arising you couldn't say that you can only say it because it's already arising so there comes the appearance of choice and that is good you see of course you can see beyond it and can see that ultimately it is not up to me because nothing ultimately is up to me because I'm not a separate entity I'm just a temporary expression of the one I am the totality so where does that leave us it leaves us with choosing presence the one true choice which ultimately is not a choice but it's a good it's a perspective to say it's a choice you can see and then as presence operates in your life it begins to inform your actions it inspires your thoughts it comes as even as an energy emanation then you realize more and more this isn't me it's not there's something greater than me which is yet is me I in its deepest sense is doing it and it's happening the happening and me doing become one as presence takes over your life and then the question doesn't really arise anymore is there free will or not the happening and the doing merge into one and so things unfold spontaneously words come spontaneously without a prior intention they just come who is giving these talks me the person the form that walks in here with the limited human mind with its limited little accumulated knowledge most of which it has forgotten no the it simply happens it's a phenomenon that simply happens consciousness you can say the totality is speaking through the form the form hasn't got that much to do with it it's the job of the form and

especially the form identity the me to make room for that to get out of the way or one could say to be transparent enough so that that can shine through and then you realise I'm not doing it Jesus used the expression I'm not speaking the father is doing it the father pointed to the same thing totality the one consciousness I'm not doing anything he always emphasised I'm not doing anything I'm not speaking it's not me and so it's it's beautiful when that comes into your life and you realise that you are being lived by that greater consciousness instead of struggling to make a living struggling to survive even to survive psychologically as an entity to survive in your sense of self that's the real struggle to survive not financial the struggle to survive as a self entity of me against all the other selves that are impinging upon me want something from me or want to take something away from me want to diminish me and I want to be more as that self so as presence arises then it gets easier you can actually take a backseat one could almost say you as the form you the temporary form that consciousness has taken becomes an open opening and so that's it's a beautiful way to live and so your what is determined and your choice become one there's no longer a split of my free will and what is determined by the totality they merge into one they are one and how does that happen get to practical inner alignment with this moment then you're aligned with the totality inner alignment with the totality may not look significant or may not look that great and yet there comes a yes that's all that's required that's the essence of this teaching then you become powerful but not as a separate entity intelligent whether you're educated or not no longer matters that much so that's the question on determinism and free will

[Speaker 5] (4:52:40 - 4:52:41)

thank you

[Speaker 1] (4:52:41 - 4:52:42)

thank you

[Speaker 3] (4:52:55 - 4:53:21)

this is somewhat related to that last question there's a great emphasis in the new age movement to create the life that you love to get your heart's desire and techniques such as creative visualization and affirmation are taught and taught and taught and I'm wondering how if at all these methods and this type of thinking is working with the new consciousness okay

[Speaker 1] (4:53:21 - 4:56:31)

thank you thank you yes thought of course is quite powerful it creates a reality seemingly external reality out there and so humans have discovered and that's a wonderful thing that the habitual thought patterns their conditioned thought patterns and what they experience as their reality or their life are related thought patterns that

includes also of course the more deep seated reactive patterns and it includes the emotional conditioning that can't be separated so humans have discovered and it's a great discovery that the inner and outer are connected and many people here discovered at some point perhaps that their thought processes were they discovered many negative denying things in their thought processes my thought processes were extremely negative for many years i didn't know it because i was those thought processes completely immersed in them at some point the realization can come that you are thinking certain thoughts and you suddenly see the thoughts the patterns especially old thoughts that you think frequently you suddenly realize that these thoughts are happening inside you that already is the emergence of something that is beyond thought if only from in the background then you can change thoughts once you can have observed that you are having certain thoughts you can change thoughts and many of you have done that and as your thoughts change very often reality changes also thoughts about yourself thoughts about others who i am so you can improve to some extent your world how you relate to yourself this is the stage of affirmations when you wherever you walk around in your home you there is an affirmation sticking somewhere

[Speaker 7] (4:56:35 - 4:56:36)

you

[Speaker 1] (4:56:41 - 5:11:32)

are a beautiful radiant being the bathroom and it's good to some extent it works it improves that conceptual sense of self it feels better little bit better much better sometimes and then you find you can even create certain situations improve them and when you finally get there you often find that once you have achieved your desired place or state or possession or position for a little while it's great and then it's that's not quite it either and even within it certain contradictions emerge it has a good side and a downside to it and so you find that you're beginning to encounter the limitations of rearranging your thought processes I met some people who got extremely good at rearranging their reality they got exactly what they wanted and then exactly what they wanted and made them happy and then made them unhappy and then they had to get out of it and so the emphasis in this teaching is not on that but it's on going deeper where there's no conceptual reality at all where you no longer have a relationship with yourself because a relationship with yourself is a relationship with a concept of me and that's a strange thing that even it is even possible to have a relationship with oneself talk to the black dog about ask him or her whether he has a relationship with himself he won't know what you're talking about that's the beauty of animals they are themselves completely themselves no role no problematic relationship and no need for affirmations they they don't carry the burden of a conceptual self so you break through that what emerges is a state of we go beyond the state of thinking but many of you have been have already been through also that state of re-arranging thinking and it's been good

that was already the even the fact that you were able to see your thought processes means already what is the essence of this was already arising in the background so it was already the arising of this but you didn't quite see it clearly yet it was just in the background and so you were able to see what your mind was doing to some extent so what happens when people do their affirmations visualizations in order to create their external reality in many cases who is doing the practice is still the mind made self wanting through some improved situation to enhance itself to feel better about itself to feel more recognized to feel more prosperous more of something or other more more of me so then that was the motivation so if you look closely often the motivation for doing these things is that you want to get reached there and once you get there because you are not yet fully able to enter the now that place or that attainment does not quite live up to its expectations now is there a role is there a function for that kind of thing created by your own reality in this new consciousness that emerges it is possible that you wake up one morning and you have a vision of what it is that wants to be done and that vision is joyful and it feels as if it were happening already it's not there's not the feeling that I need to get to that place to achieve greater self fulfillment I had a vision early on of a book I saw it in a dream that had my name on it and then many years passed before it became reality visions can come in this is what I have to do this is what I have to do oh yes and that may imply who knows that this is what I have to do where does it come from it's a realization of what presence wants to do through you that's all very often it doesn't come in quite that way it comes in a way that an external thing comes seemingly an external thing comes into your life that asks you to do something and more often than not it is a response to something that arises within the totality in your life an external thing a person a situation an event comes into your life you respond out of that you respond to whatever it is so the need for visualizing is greatly reduced it may come in almost as a vision of something that is in the process of unfolding is not yet manifested but you already see it that can happen but not so much as a goal that I need to achieve or go towards you realize in that vision if it comes it may not come it is not an essential aspect of it that on some level that is already here but mostly and this is the way I live it is simply responding to something that comes to you and then that becomes then the play of inner and outer and the strange thing is it is in that state of consciousness those things that are needed for the unfolding not for your self achievement but that which is part of the unfolding of consciousness comes into your life sometimes from within there is a realization of this is what I have to do that can happen this is what I have to do beyond decision making doubt doesn't come in when it is that clear this is what I have to do and you don't know how you arrived at that realization how do you know that this is what I have to do I know I just know and you may not know why I woke up one morning in England when I was living there knowing I have to move to the west coast of North America didn't know why but it was so strong there was no arguing with it so I got ready to move and I moved and arrived still not knowing why people said you're mad well they'd said it before you're going into the completely unknown what's there for you nothing why are you going there I have to go I

have to go after a few weeks sitting around on the west coast the book started to happen I looked at my old notes I had writing had happened before in England but very different writing happened then different energy field to it a stream of energy and then I had to leave the west coast went back to England writing stopped little while few months later went back to the west coast then only at that point did I realize why I had to move for some reason it couldn't have happened in England the energy field there didn't pull the book out of here so it's obeying the impulse and going with it when it's beyond question that this is how it is to be so sometimes it comes from within that happens more often there is the outer coming in as you dwell in that state that which is needed comes as an external thing which to which you then respond and then who knows where that leads it's the trust that is the beautiful thing that comes with living in that way so it would be relatively rare that you have a vision of some concrete cause of action it's possible I know of one or two people who had that who had woke up one morning with a vision of something that was already there consciousness can use all kinds of ways and means and channels so it's not a question of what I want for myself as a separate entity but how I can be an openness for what the universe wants so there comes a point when positive thinking is it's been a stage on your journey a good one and then you step beyond that also and even the affirmations eventually they may come down take them off the wall little pointers because you may fluctuate from being drawn back into the little me and it is sometimes may be helpful to have little pointers here and there to point you back they may be thoughts they may for a little while still be an affirmation here and there from wherever of course in miracles whatever it may be a little affirmation a little sign a little sign post that occasionally as you enter the bedroom in a state of and suddenly you see the affirmation it could help wake you up okay is there any other question

[Speaker 6] (5:11:35 - 5:11:55)

well first of all I wasn't sure if this afternoon after your comments this morning if I was going to be speaking to you or to the black dog I wasn't sure whether to ask my question or wag my tail since it's you I'll ask the question maybe wag my tail later

[Speaker 7] (5:11:56 - 5:11:56)

my

[Speaker 6] (5:11:58 - 5:12:32)

understanding of how we nourish the pain body through negative thoughts or so called negative thoughts anger bitterness resentment hatred of one kind or another for things that are in our life or that we don't want in some way or another what I want to know is if we also nourish the pain body through thoughts of longing or desire for that which we want to bring into our life

[Speaker 1] (5:12:32 - 5:19:40)

oh thank you good question thank you this is true there are such thoughts that express longing or desire for whatever it may be that I believe would fulfill me they don't look on the surface like negative thoughts they might look quite nice but if you look on the other side of that thought for example say I want to be rich or wealthy that longing for freedom because there's a belief that this will give me freedom I mean to be wealthy in itself is nothing but what I believe would that that would give me is it would give me freedom and it would give me make me more give me more other people's recognition I can do anything go anywhere by anything totally free and other people will regard me highly so that enhance myself so when the statement is made wealthy I like that or whatever it may be I want the ideal partner I want the I that place what is implied with these longing thoughts I am even the thought even if you say I am wealthy which is a an affirmation that would work better than I want to be wealthy a thought any thought has a polarity to it and so there's also underlying this there is the statement that I am poor because if you were truly wealthy would you be saying I'm wealthy you know you're wealthy whoever I don't know who is wealthy these days Donald Trump maybe he's wealthy again if he is in his penthouse in New York he does probably does not have an affirmation on the mirror that says I am wealthy he doesn't need it he knows so every thought really anything I want to attain this or that is already a statement that you lack it and that yes there is pain in that in that wanting in any kind of wanting there is some pain and often considerable pain because wanting implies lacking wanting is the desire desire what in ancient traditions in spiritual terms they call desire the Buddha talked about it desire is the one thing to get rid of so but what is desire a better word is wanting desire sounds a little bit too abstract wanting gives you a clearer sense of what it is and the power that very often is behind that I want which can lead to action but action that always has that the neediness and the negative polarity that is behind wanting that flows into any action that is that I want it and so many people are involved in long years of daydreaming or this kind of longing that you describe there is pain in that also and it is a subtle way not such an obvious way in which emotional pain is also being created through your thought processes as you state correctly not directly but indirectly and that is moderate food for the pain body it's because there is that not enough me a sense of dissatisfaction and there are emotions that go with that neediness certain sometimes half expressed thoughts as me having been treated unfairly and wanting and needing this to complete me so watch you can as more presence arises you can watch what happens in your mind and the thought processes are there and see how the pain body can be very clever in trying to get if it's deprived of food here it will try to get its food through something else pain bodies are looking out and they are the media feeds pain bodies a lot of the films feed the pain bodies that's why they are made and the pain bodies when you become very conscious so the pain body cannot use your thought processes anymore and you don't feed it other things what people consume when they watch a lot of the TV things you see or films violence that the pain body loves this film will make you feel really bad

that's what basically it says when you read the advertisement for the film it will make you feel very bad indeed you will witness the most horrible things on that screen and then people run and go pay their money and if all else fails the pain body may create certain pains in your body physical pain

[Speaker 7] (5:19:42 - 5:19:43)

and

[Speaker 1] (5:19:43 - 5:29:40)

because it can no longer use your mind so suddenly you get sharp pains here or there and you don't know why what is this and it can happen people have told me this when you place your attention on it it can shift to another part of the body because pain bodies don't like to be looked at and so the pain body then hopes that you will react to the pain and the pain could create emotion again it could create thought processes again of unhappiness and then great it's feeding again so this is a good question there are subtle ways in which the pain body can feed even on thoughts that on the surface do not immediately appear to be negative but have that negative dimension built into them a painful me needing and wanting something that's not as powerful food for the pain body as an anger attack but that works too so alertness required alert to watch another way in which pain bodies try to get at you can be through somebody else around you because pain bodies are connected once I had a beautiful session when I was still seeing people privately with somebody who came with an extremely heavy pain body and was sitting there and who was sitting there wasn't there was a pain body sitting there emanating that frequency that pain bodies emanate that a sensitive person can feel even after they've left the room a sensitive person comes into the room and says what's happening here it leaves that behind but we had such a beautiful session that in that session presence arose in that person even while the pain body was still there there was a sudden recognition of pain body as the pain body and in that the pain body withdrew subsided or lost some of its energy field wow there was the clear seeing that that was not him and there was a beautiful session he left almost in a state of astonishment because all his life that was him that was his most essential characteristic everybody knew him as that kind of person everybody knew him as the pain body that was him and that was he left I sat there for a while I felt hungry I went out around the corner to an Indian restaurant I sat at a table and at a table in front of me there was sitting the heaviest pain body I've ever seen and he was shouting and fuming he wasn't going to pay for his food he was in a wheelchair a wheelchair can be for some people has been the greatest transformation to be not to be able to move freely anymore has taken some people into presence has forced some people I've met some people in wheelchairs who became free through their teacher their disability they became free and then he stormed off in his wheelchair out of the restaurant and two minutes later he came back in and he had an electric thing the waitress tried to push him out again there was a huge drama

and he pushed his electric wheelchair into forward and he pinned the wheelchair did you do all that it's interesting that the pain body came the moment after the pain body seemed to have suffered almost such a defeat to be exposed as the pain body and then it came back again in another form and said I'm still here it's very interesting how that works in the end I simply sat there as an observing presence in that restaurant in the end a huge policeman came in quite old perhaps nearing he had seen it all and there came the thing that comes when people he in his own way there was presence in him at least in when he exercised his duties he must have been reasonable 40 years or something and he came in he just looked at him he looked at the manager I said has he paid his bill he mentioned no it's okay I don't want it and he just the policeman just a few words quiet words came out of his mouth and the mouth the man became very quiet and left the policeman said goodbye he won't come back beautiful to see in some people in whom presence may not yet operate in the totality of their lives he had achieved mastery and presence in his function as a policeman wonderful to see but the example I gave to see that sometimes pain bodies can come externally to challenge you again through some external form by the way be very careful when you feel pain body is active in you then you actually draw to yourself other pain bodies they will then directly attack you directly go for you because they recognize an active pain body you could go into a shop a store buy something and suddenly the storekeeper attacks you with says what did I do you came as a pain body and his pain body recognized you so the likelihood of an accident happening or getting into some kind of drama is greater when you walk around the city with an active pain body let alone not to mention your place of work where some people at work in some corporations some people have pain bodies that are almost permanently active and very rarely dormant happens beautiful practice pain body practice beautiful teacher and teaching that also becomes an opening becomes a doorway so thank you for that question that was one subtle aspect of pain body nobody had asked that before and it's true perhaps one or two more questions I don't know do we go back to that side now there's some kind of structure here for me

[Speaker 2] (5:29:49 - 5:30:25)

if you want to make this one brief so they can you can answer theirs that's fine I think you touched on this earlier when you talked about that fish tank where the guppies were coming out the little fish were being rebirthed and it brought me back to this question I've had for a while if all thoughts and emotions end with the dissolution of the body then what part of our individualized consciousness goes on afterward and where does it go before it comes back as one of those little guppies in God's fish tank

[Speaker 1] (5:30:32 - 5:47:20)

you may have heard the Zen story the disciple comes to the master and says master what happens to us after death the master says how should I know this is not the end the disciple says well you are the master aren't you the master says maybe but I'm not

the dead one the question let's see if this question can be answered without leaving the now what part of our individuality survives if anything that survives whatever survives here after this rebirth after this is the essence that's I'm exaggerating a little because I'm sure a few other things also survive the retreat but what we are going to is what is it that causes you to feel and to know that you are how what is that I am what is the strange thing the one that was the philosopher Descartes who wanted to find out is there anything that I can know without any doubt whatsoever is there anything because he came after the middle ages when people had all kinds of weird ideas and superstitions and weird beliefs it was also an age of spirituality but it was also an age of strange mind structures and then he came and said what is there anything I can know and he thought and thought and thought and finally realized that he was always thinking and then he came up with that idea that I think therefore I am of course that was not true because he hadn't gone deep enough he hadn't realized that the sense of beingness of being you that's innermost sense of identity goes far beyond thinking it has in fact nothing to do with thinking except that it gets mixed up with thinking that at this very moment the question if I ask you who are you or you ask yourself who am I this is a spiritual practice who and then listen within to the you listen for that deepest sense of I of beingness not your memories you could forget them all or your name a deepest just a sense of your own beingness it's hiding underneath all the mind structures it is not it has no form to it and that is who you are that is the I am that is why Jesus said before Abraham was I am there's no past in it I am I am that's the formless being everything else is form you could have a hallucination you could have a dream people often ask is that real or is it not real any whatever phenomenon arises some people even ask they say the world doesn't seem that real to me anymore is it real or is it not real or you have a vision nobody else sees it so they call it a hallucination and you say is that real whatever it is any dream any vision any sense perception there must be something real in it the essence must otherwise it would not be for anything to be it must have an essence of realness nothing can be without an essence of realness the form may be very temporary so even a hallucination requires consciousness in which the hallucination happens the consciousness is the essence it's a temporary form it comes and goes consciousness is that essence of who you are unconditioned that remains here when the when you realize the forms to be insubstantial that is your innermost nature the mind then says yeah but what about me that means the feeling of identity has again been bound up with mind structures what about that me that those are temporary formations I don't want to give any really to utter anything here that goes beyond what can be immediately known because that is all you need what can be immediately known what you can know for yourself and this is the essence of all knowing is that how wonderful to realize that I am not that little limited entity that I thought I was that is recognized as a temporary formation in that wonderful play of forms almost one could say a seed a potential flower for the flowering of consciousness if consciousness flowers when consciousness knows itself realizes itself the universe is becoming self aware now there is no end to the questions that the mind can now ask no end the mind can now ask why why isn't the

universe self aware already why can't they start off with can't it start off with self awareness then we don't have to go through all this how long is it all going to take what's the purpose of it all how will it end and what then after that it is the mind what I have said is the absolute limit I rarely go that far where I say the universe is in the process of becoming self aware which is also not the absolute truth it would be absurd to expect to understand the vastness through a few sounds coming out of somebody's mouth how many sounds are there not many and how many letters are there in the alphabet not that many a few symbols and then you put them together in different order you rearrange the symbols or the sounds in different orders okay let's try this one or let's try this and now this is the explanation of the universe of course Woody Allen put it even better you can't even find your way around Chinatown it's the limits of understanding and not even attempting to understand through conceptual thought what forever eludes conceptual thought which is tiny tiny but in the in going within and as space consciousness arises there is somehow a deep knowing in that which cannot be put into words for example there is a deep knowing that life is eternal that life has no opposite that I am eternal and even that is almost going too far even to make that statement because there is no concepts there are no concepts or thoughts in that knowing it is a place of simple nowhere it comes stopped and so it's important understanding on an intellectual conceptual level is not an important part of the evolution of consciousness the course in miracles puts it very similarly it says I don't know if it's a literal quote but it's very close it may be almost insulting to you when you are told that your understanding is not a powerful contribution to the truth and one of the things you relinquish in that great act of surrender of letting go is the desire to understand and that's a you can still try to understand how to get from here to there on that level okay but the desire to understand the great scheme of things there comes a point then and the point is now where you see I don't know and that comes into your everyday life also as an end of the need to continuously interpret the universe around you you don't need to interpret every event and every person habitually the mind does that why not let it be as it is that person that event and respond to it if needed out of that space of space of letting it be the need to figure it out let's have one more question and if there may be other questions arising in the collective mind of this room all questions every question is relatively important but no question is absolutely important if you haven't if you don't get the essence by now no further question will get you there so let's have another question

[Speaker 2] (5:47:27 - 5:48:10)

thank you last year a very dear friend of mine who had a tremendous intellect and was full of much compassion committed suicide that is why I'm here today so in one sense it was a tremendous gift to me and my husband on the other hand it's been very painful now I believe in chapter 7 as you discuss portals into the unmanifested you alluded to death as possibly a portal is that true with suicide as well

[Speaker 1] (5:48:12 - 8:59:49)

thank you thank you I may have mentioned before that the egoic sense of self has built by the grace of the divine has built into itself a self-destruct mechanism so the suffering that the egoic self creates for itself is also that which usually over time erodes and sometimes suddenly destroys it the suffering that it creates is also the agent that erodes the egoic self beautiful and so in the case of suicide the only personal experience I have of suicide is having come very close to it to the just the edge so I know the state the inner state that leads to suicide which is simultaneously where the seemingly opposite functions of the egoic self meet and those opposite functions are creating suffering and needing to triumph in my separate sense of selfhood so on the one hand suicide is the ultimate triumph of the ego in its battle against the universe and it says I will show you this ultimate way of being right is that on the one hand I know that retrospectively from my inner state when I looked back on it that took me to the edge of suicide and you look deep into it it is the ego on the one hand wanting to triumph and prove myself right in the last act of it's like somebody you know people who are in disagreement with a group and they get up shout something and before anybody else can say something they walk out and this is a relatively mild way of the ego triumphing this is my absolute position of rightness and before anybody can say anything you leave to question whether you're right or not so it is an act almost of the last act of self-assertion is that but at the same time it is also the ego destroying itself at the same time so the two seemingly contradictory movements or functions of the ego in an act of suicide come together it is both one could say at that moment the ego triumphs and then and then comes an opening for a moment the portal then opens the possibility of death whenever death happens there is the possibility of going through that portal whether or not the egoic entity destroyed itself totally or whether it can happen that the ego becomes that huge chunks fall out of the ego through the suffering created remnants may remain this I know from observing psychological kinds of deaths that people die because you can learn about death by learning about psychological death when disasters happen to people sometimes the disaster which in most cases is self-created by ego that the disaster can sometimes dissolve the entire ego structure or the disaster can greatly diminish the ego structure so what then survives after if disaster happens in your life you die a kind of death through it but it leaves behind a more compassionate being ego big chunks have fallen or been removed from the ego structure it's no longer that solid after a great disaster but the ego as a structure may survive and could reassemble itself as you recover from the disaster and sometimes it's enough for one little remnant to remain one little identification one egoic resentment towards someone one self image of me especially in some area of my life one little thing can be enough for the entire egoic structure to come back after a few years it builds it up again the disaster recedes into the background but it left an opening even the slightest bit left is very much like the robot in terminator 2 or whatever it was where this thing from the future comes here and it's built of liquid metal looks like a human and you can destroy it as many times as you

like if there's only a drop left of that liquid metal it quickly reassembles itself ego is a little bit like that so we can what we know from what happens to the ego when through self created suffering it experiences disaster and then becomes greatly diminished through that or sometimes destroyed the same thing will happen when the ego commits this final act of triumph that is a great disaster it could have the effect of destroying the ego or it is possible that the ego still survives in some form and then whatever it does this energy field that survives that was a person once this energetic formation nothing is ever lost every human being in this room because every human being is connected to the totality of humanity and whether you believe in reincarnation or not doesn't matter every human being whatever any human has experienced you have already experienced because you are only the outcome of the whole past humanity you carry all that within you whether you believe in personal reincarnation or not we'll put that aside you carry within you the past of humanity every human you have experienced it all ultimately humanity is one organism one being not appearing as millions of entities but it is one evolving organism we place excessive importance on the temporary individual expressions of that one organism that one organism is the essence of your being you are that one organism and one day perhaps there will only be one left when humanity has completed its evolution completely that will be one again one divine being male and female in one the end of duality and so you being one with the totality being an expression of the one you have experienced suicide many times you have committed murder and you have been murdered many times and all the other things that humanity has been through we have all been through it many times and so it is all part of the evolving consciousness through the human form nothing is ever lost every life is a contribution to that we cannot fully understand how every life contributes there is an essence in every life that is a nectar and that is left that is the contribution the distillation of what seems like an individual life there is a learning process and some of that learning is through human pain a lot of it in the evolutionary journey of humanity is through human pain and then learning happens also in other ways as is the case now so trust that nothing is ever lost ultimately no one is ever lost it is humanity experiencing human pain this is on a deepest level on an again let's shift to an individual level that what seems like an entity whose life has not worked out that is the surface appearance of things if you look beyond the surface appearance of things there is no such thing as a life not working out every life is part of the learning process and contributes to the learning process of the totality so we need to go beyond that and see some humans temporary forms make their contribution in the form of the pain that they suffer and perhaps they awaken at that moment of death out of the pain we cannot know when that portal opened up the body dissolved the psychological structure the portal opened up the strength the most unlikely humans are ready for the transformation of consciousness and we cannot say that this human being may not have been ready consciousness works in mysterious ways I'm sometimes here surprised that who is ready for this people you would say no what they have done look who they are look at their life look what they've done to others or to themselves they are obviously not ready and yet

they may be ready everything that happens seemingly senseless events like that suicide seemingly senseless collective disasters like last year in New York all those events within the totality have a beautiful place every death and every suffering is part of the totality that is evolving nothing is lost when a form dissolves and so from our limited perspective yes certain things look bad from a higher perspective it's fine how do we know what the humans who died in the two towers how many of those in the last seconds of their life broke through identifications that otherwise would have taken a long time to get through when death comes so suddenly and so unexpectedly that shock how many people awakened into a realization in the last moments of to their essential reality as often has been reported by people who face death accepted death and they report that incredible certainty that there is no death that certainty that knowing that deep peace that is suddenly there as death approaches and those who have gone into death and come back report in most cases that all fear left them because fear is only the fear of the form and many of those who did come back from a near death experience had for the rest of their lives enormous trust because they knew nothing was going to be lost nothing was going to be lost nothing is ever lost when a form dissolves that's all that it is and the dissolving of form has its own beauty even when it looks tragic on the surface the dissolving of form has its own beauty and the most tragic event is also a sacred event and that includes suicide it includes any tragic event there is a greater harmony that governs the whole the totality but when you are in the midst of it you can't see that you're like tearing a little fragment out of a huge painting and then you look at that fragment and say what's this all about it doesn't make sense because you cannot see how one life fits into the totality of all life it's impossible but the fact is that it does so with that comes a surrender that perhaps can come to you now to see surrender now for your friend even now your act of surrender now will have an influence on that event that now seems to be in the past the surrender now affects even what looks like past because ultimately there's no past any act of surrender even changes past so your job is to surrender to the pain that was there the pain that you still feel and go into that allow it to be allow it to be allow what is to be allow what was to be and that is your contribution to that what looks like a tragic event thank you let's go into stillness I suggest we spend the rest of the day in noble silence except perhaps for this body sitting on a chair this afternoon words may come some of you may be watching a film tonight and there's no reason why you cannot be silent as you watch the film fierce I believe it is tonight fierce grace about the life of Ramdas a good film and so if you can extend the silence into sleep until sleep happens tonight for those of you who have come with a partner or friend it would be good occasionally also to walk alone out here in nature in silence and awareness that's why it's called noble silence there's silence and noble silence silence means you're not speaking noble silence means you're not speaking and aware the expression I believe originally comes from Buddha the Buddha or Buddhism about many subjects it is said when asked the Buddha kept noble silence which means he didn't give you an answer that reminds me that probably tomorrow morning we'll have a question and answer session questions perhaps answers this morning I believe there was a CD

played of meditation music and if you still have it if we could listen as a musical illustration of this morning's what we were talking about this morning this morning's talk I'd like you to just listen for two or three minutes to a little piece and what to listen to mainly predominantly is not the sounds or the tones not the foreground but the background the background of space the background of stillness and with music like that even the act of listening to that because it is the act of listening to an absence the absence of sound listening to stillness brings about inner stillness it's only with that that you can acknowledge the dimension of silence external silence only with the inner dimension of stillness which is consciousness without thought that's what stillness is consciousness without thought only from that dimension can you be aware of silence what seems like external silence that's why that I mentioned perhaps briefly on our first day whenever that was perhaps yesterday the how listening to silence out in nature or in a room can also be an opening into that dimension because you cannot listen acknowledge silence notice silence without the dimension of stillness thinking cannot even notice silence it's a little mystery and it's a miracle the simple act of noticing that dimension puts you into that dimension otherwise you can't notice that so listening to this music we are aware of the background more than what happens one could say the canvas on which the sound is painted and as you do that that pure awareness that consciousness without thought arises so if we have that cd if we could listen to track two of this morning's meditation cd but the background is more important than what happens the only way the dimension of the sacred can come into this world is through the awareness of the background which is awareness of awareness space inner space we said this morning in any interaction ask yourself whether there is space in the interaction the very question makes it possible for space to open up this is really no different from asking whether there is love in the interaction because out of that love arises the awareness of that is love I don't use that word too often because it's been misused a lot so to see this is the essence of our retreat the essence of any spiritual teaching to see this to realize this truth that is so simple is one thing no thing that's what that realization they call Satori in Zen when you for the first time see and another thing is to live it in your daily life the ability to live it could be called enlightenment and again it's not that helpful a concept because it sounds like an achievement somebody's achievement and one could almost say that the essence of enlightenment is the opposite of somebody's achievement enlightenment and perhaps some of you may have come here expecting to gain something it's not a gain of anything since it's already here it would be closer to the truth to say that enlightenment is a loss of something of that which covers it up so it cannot be an achievement so the question is then how to live it in one's daily life where the challenges pile up one after the other living in this world mad to some extent faced with the challenges of everyday life which are primarily in oneself they seem to appear as external factors but your real challenge is the conditioned mind the momentum of it and your real challenge is not to lose awareness when that starts up not to lose awareness when the pain body becomes active and associates itself with the thinking mind old emotion old human emotion old human pain

linking in with the activity of thought personalizing the pain the pain body says don't talk about me I can't stand it so there's thousands of years of conditioning collective mental conditioning plus your personal conditioning from this lifetime which is bad enough in itself and the personal pain from this lifetime which would be quite enough and so what to be aware of in your daily life is of course the movement of thought and the flux of emotions aware means know that it's there so that there's a space around it one could say a space between you which is a space between you and the thought the space between you and the emotion but ultimately you are the space so then the emotion happens within the space that you are knowing yourself as space not as that which happens in that space this is why this music is helpful knowing yourself as the underlying field not that which takes birth and then dies in the field comes and goes so it means not getting not believing in every label that the mind comes up with that's why it's so important to begin to live in such a way that your life is not the aliveness of life is not obscured continuously by labels and concepts that's why it's so important to go for a walk here and perceive clearly aware in the space of awareness without needing the labels why it's so important to sometimes do small things little movements that conventional little activities and bring presence to them a space they happen within the spaciousness of no thought just aware presence even as simple a thing as putting an object from here to there while it travels from here to there there's a space of pure awareness so it's a beautiful gesture it becomes beautiful through that before it wasn't beautiful it was a means to an end I need to put this here it doesn't have that quality to it that comes only with awareness walking across your room consciously from the door to the bed free from thought for that little interval it's just beautiful so this is the beginning of not getting completely drawn into labels and believing that when you have a label you know what it is living in that state of openness which is true intelligence which has the appearance that you don't know and yet all knowing arises out of it all true knowing so here we have this is the beginning little labels not to believe in the ultimate reality of the labels and then of course there's more the human mind there are huge patterns of ways in which you interpret the universe inherited from your personal past inherited from the collective past your cultural past the collective past of mankind of humankind ways of interpretation which are based mainly on separative egoic consciousness the little me interprets the world in certain ways and no longer totally believe in one's interpretation of situations events or people and beware of premature conclusions which the mind quickly reaches about things and people that's how it is so beware of all interpretations of people or events and recognize them when they come because they come recognize them as interpretations as a perspective perhaps a possible perspective never the entire truth and very often a complete fantasy so it's always a standing back from thought into the spaciousness being the spaciousness there's the interpretation and there you stand back a little bit there are many stories in Zen to illustrate how interpretations can mislead you I will tell you a little one it was for a long time the custom in monasteries when visitors arrived in the evening to ask for lodging sometimes other monks or other visitors in order to gain the right to spend the

night in the monastery they'd have to challenge somebody who lives in the monastery to an argument and win the argument but it was a Zen argument so it was never conducted with many words and if they won they could spend the night if they lost they would have to move on so there was one monastery where the abbot was a monk and his younger brother who was not yet very enlightened also lived there as a monk the younger brother only had one eye he had lost his eye early in childhood so one evening the younger brother came to the abbot and said a visitor has just arrived and I happen to be standing at the gates and he challenged me to an argument a discussion what do I do he had never done it and the abbot his elder brother knew that that was a risky thing so he said but he had been challenged so he said ok conduct the argument in silence ok he went off ten minutes later the visitor comes and knocks at the door of the abbot and says I'd like to pay my respects to you and take my leave because your brother is so clever and enlightened he completely defeated me in the argument and the abbot said how so what happened he said well it started our discussion started said the visitor with me raising one finger to signify buddha the enlightened one then your brother raised two fingers to signify buddha the enlightened one is not complete without the dharma of the buddha's teaching then I raised three fingers to indicate that the third element is also needed which is the sangha the brotherhood of monks without which it's not complete so here they went and then the visitor said your brother suddenly shook his fist in my face to signify that all arises from the one act of enlightenment the one realisation and so he completely defeated me I'll move on to another monastery and seek lodging there goodbye and a few minutes later the younger brother comes in and says to the abbot where is this fellow I'm going to beat him up he completely insulted me and the abbot says tell me what happened he said well we started he raised one finger to say to make fun of my own one eye then I decided to raise two fingers to compliment him on the fact that he had two eyes and then he dared to raise three fingers to show that even between us we only had three eyes and so I was going to punch him in the face but he ran away different realities different worlds and so beautiful example this of course was the conditioning of the brother and probably how did he get as a child he was mocked many times so there was already expecting something like that to happen and immediately a neutral event was interpreted so basically and this happens to many people still in this world they inhabit a fantasy world of conditioning from the past and looking at events that are happening in the present through that conditioning and interpreting events through that conditioning and in many cases it's complete fantasy but the strange thing is when you continuously interpret the world in certain ways it tends to reflect back to you that interpretation so one could say that what is called karma usually it's regarded as things that happen to you in your life good things bad things good karma good karma bad karma but really how your life unfolds is perhaps 10% of what happens to you and 90% of the reactions to what happens to you and the continuous reactions create their own reality the reality confirms back to you that your interpretation is correct that's how it works so if you interpret human beings as being basically dishonest and out to get you or get something from you that becomes your

selective perception of reality that's the way in which you interpret events and then after a while because perception is selective you will get confirmation because you will only meet those people that will conform to your expectations the others you're not even interested in and you might even bring out in people who are not totally conscious yet that which you expect from them or that which you fear from them you pull it out of them if they're not fully conscious so to be aware very much of the way in which one interprets reality that's why this I like this Byron Katie a spiritual teacher has this question that you ask yourself whenever you have thoughts arising about a person a situation an event and you have your interpretation of it do I really know that this is true can I really know that this is true and then you look deeply and say I don't really know if this interpretation is true I don't really know it maybe it looks true to me but I don't really know it and so you're beginning to take a step back from thought any thought so that you can begin to dwell in the region of no thought and have your home your dwelling place there not in the interpretations of the mind have your dwelling place in that field in that pure intelligence and out of there yes you respond to situations and events but you don't react react is comes out of the old conditioning so people carry inside them the past they look upon the present through the eyes of the past and so what then happens is that that provides the continuity between past and future you make sure that the future is going to be the same as the past and this is how most people live and this is the essence of karma is that there is a continuity between the unconscious past in you and the events that unfold you are creating it through your interpretations and total identification with the thought structures which then create that reality nations do it to each other collective bodies entities interpret it in their way cannot see any other perspective except that there is no other perspective this is the truth as the I mentioned the writer that I read in New York Times competing narrative the unwillingness or the inability to accommodate a competing narrative to see that hmm and to hold that in awareness so to see inside oneself the structure of thought and the movement of old emotion that goes with it and step back from it so that there is some space and that applies particularly of course when the movement of thought becomes connected to the old emotion and they become a vicious circle the old pain body the old emotion personal emotions from your past collective pain from humanity as a whole with which even every baby comes into this world most babies already cry when they why do they already cry there's already pain there some babies cry more than others some babies have a heavier pain body than others it doesn't mean those who don't have a heavy pain body are closer to liberation maybe the other way around who knows but that is there and that pain body is an aspect of the mind made self and it is that which makes it hard to step beyond it if it were only thought structures it wouldn't be that hard but it is thought structures combined with a force of old human pain so when the pain body that lives in every human not always active sometimes dormant for periods of time when it needs to replenish itself which it can only do by absorbing energy frequency that corresponds to its own vibrational frequency which is the frequency of pain in whatever form whatever it is this explains it better than concepts concepts create a distance okay anger or

heaviness of depression can't can't take any more can't take any more of this when the pain body needs to replenish itself it can only do that by creating energy energy of that vibrates at the same frequency which is pain and so it will move into your mind the emotion rises up into the mind thinking and then suddenly your thinking reflects the emotion it you think along the lines of the emotion so if the predominant energy field of the emotion is anger you think angry thoughts about of course it will be about something here the situation somebody next to you the situation you are in right now it seems to be caused the thoughts that you are thinking with great energy seem to be caused by something around you but of course that which is around you very often is a relatively insignificant event or thing that somebody did or said but the emotion the thoughts and the emotions of extremely powerful incredible force to them out of proportion to the event which was really only the triggering event not the causal event but the mind made self believes it to be the causal event you caused this you did that to me and not surprisingly a very very common characteristic of the self linked with pain body is to see itself as a victim of some personal situation very common almost every pain body has it the interpretation of reality as doing something to me because in miracles puts it beautifully it says beware of the temptation of seeing yourself unfairly treated and that is almost in everyone that is an aspect of pain body and the self mind made self when it links in with pain body something there is doing something even the criminals in prison more almost all of them consider themselves to be victims in some ways one could say they are it's a perspective you can take any perspective so let's see when the pain body needs to feed there is a readiness for it to come it cannot yet come unless it can find some trigger the trigger could be just one thought that goes through your head that's the slightest trigger it can use one a little negative thought a little negative reaction then the pain body can use that and link into that and that would lead to a stream of thinking along the lines of the pain body so just a little even driving in the traffic an upset about another driver oh this when the pain body is ready to come up it will use that moment and that will lead to a train of thought movement that is increasingly painful and the pain body loves it it feeds on every painful thought because the pain body is feeding on the movement of thought and then that is the movement of unconsciousness is there a possibility at that point to wake up yes now there is if there is enough presence in you there is the possibility of knowing what is happening as it happens if you can catch it at an early stage it's even easier just as it arises catch it to see to feel the emotion directly before it becomes a thought if you can do that it cannot begin to use your thought processes if your awareness is there and that requires alertness that requires that if the alertness is there you can watch the emotion wanting to become a thought and you continue simply to watch it on the level of the emotion semi-physical entity beautiful it's no longer a personal matter it's simply the movement of emotion in you and when you watch it it is implied that you accept it because it's here it's part of your acceptance practice which is the most powerful way to go beyond is to accept what's there there it is if you don't catch it at a very early stage you may have to catch it already when it thought is already moving and then you may notice a strong disinclination if that's the

word to want to get out of it there may still be a presence in the background a witnessing presence how strong it is then that will determine whether or not you can still rise above it step out of it see it for what it is ah pain body and feel it oh and then it's not replenishing itself through your thinking of course as you I'm sure many of you know it can it also likes to replenish itself through other people to provoke a reaction to challenge somebody else please give me some emotional reaction react you did that to me I didn't you did it to me so it feeds on the other persons it wants to awaken the other person's pain body pain bodies love other pain bodies so partners feed on each other's pain body it's an essential ingredient of most relationships the drama that is a necessary part of relationships periodic drama and after a while the energy the pain body has replenished itself and it subsides and then the same cycle starts again and so to bring consciousness into that requires alertness vigilance you cannot suppress it it would only get stronger for temporarily you could I'm not going to let this pain body get the better of me I'm just going to sit here not a and acknowledging what the mind may call negative emotions is also dangerous the minds might be saying you may have an image if you're still deriving your sense of self from thought you may have an image in your mind of who you are a spiritual person maybe someone who has already gone beyond these things or if you are a Christian and want to follow the teaching of Jesus without having gone to the bottom of it just the externals then you may have an image of yourself as a good Christian or good Christian there's certain things that a good Christian does not feel to be a good and so there may be a clash between the emotion that you feel and your self image and then you deny that it's there I'm not angry at all how dare you even suggest that I'm angry I can go so far as to somebody shouting I am not angry so to watch that because people believe that the emotions that they experience are some personal dilemma that they are not yet advanced enough so that's why they are still there or not good enough people to have those emotions I'm not good enough if I have those emotions it's the belief that emotions are a personal matter deriving your sense of self partly from emotions and partly from thought that's the mind made self consists of those elements and so there is nothing personal neither in emotion nor in thought it's just human thought no different from other human thought another human next to you has very similar thought structures and emotions anger anger is anger in the other person it's very similar to your anger basically the same the stories around it may be slightly different the explanations of why I'm angry may be slightly different from person to person slightly different script in the head but so what people derive their identity from the sense of person personal selfhood is ultimately not personal at all it is human emotion and human thinking and that makes it a little easier when you realize that your emotions are not personal matter they are human emotions to do with the fact that you are a human temporarily a human here on this planet have inherited certain things that are connected with the past of this planet and those things are there that's all so you can by watching an emotion you begin to depersonalize the emotion not denying but depersonalizing it so it is not a personal problem of yours anymore the fact that you get anger attacks once a week or whatever the pain body whatever form the

pain body may take then you can actually see that as the fiery emotion of that it's easier to accept it too when it's you realize it as not self as not you it's easier to accept that yes there are still human emotions in you oh how dreadful so with that begins a depersonalization of pain body the pain body wants to pretend to be a person and wants to take me very seriously it wants to be linked to the story of me it gives energy to the story which then becomes a very unhappy story when the pain body is there so and even to see that the story also of me which consists of thought and reactive patterns thoughts reactive patterns memories mental images are thought forms that's concepts thought forms and images that happen in the field of consciousness and again you would be surprised how similar the basic structure of human thought is from person to person when you get to the bottom of it in yourself you know every other mind even from other cultures or in other cultures of course the story may be different but the basic elements are the same of totally identifying with one mental position if you're a woman and you travel to certain countries and forget to change your clothes and you arrive at the airport wearing a skirt and short sleeved blouse then certain people in those countries will immediately interpret you as immoral has no shame is immoral and that is their perspective when they come here you might have some other interpretation about them and they cannot yet step beyond it and see it as one as an interpretation as a perspective they are still completely wedded to that mind form that mind structure and anybody who challenges it challenges their very identity that's the essence of unconsciousness so it's not so your self is not in thought and emotion it is in the space in which the thoughts and emotions happen the one who can allow the thoughts and emotions to be there which is the space which is the I am presence the deepest I am-ness I am is usually followed by some concept or word this or that or a name just a thought form the most frequently used word in the language may be I and usually it refers to the mind made me and its emotions which is the story and when people tell you about I they tell you about their story but the deeper meaning of I I is both the greatest illusion that the word that contains the greatest illusion and the word that contains the deepest truth in language the deepest essence usually when I is used it is the illusion the illusory entity but potentially I is the deepest statement of who you are I am pure aware presence of beingness and you can only know that when thought comes to an end what is left let's say you don't even remember your name anymore or the stories from your past at this moment can't remember my name or the stories from my past what is left is there anything essential that you have lost no in the absence of the memory of your story or your name the deepest sense of beingness is still there which before got mixed up in the stories that you were telling yourself and others this is the amazing thing that that remains and it remains in its essence and that is so precious and so beautiful and that's you I it is the divine in you I it is formless and that's why in the the most profound statement in the bible is God's self definition who are you and God says I am that I am the essence of I am is that and sometimes it comes to the mind who through some apparent accident accidentally lose everything that they thought they were life takes it away from them strips you of all the things that you've been hanging on to and then

you're left with this bear I am a deep sense of beingness aliveness of presence everything has been removed from you that works too or here it works in many different ways this in some places they may not come to teachings like this somebody may lose become a refugee lose their homes loss does it sometimes so this is emerging now on a larger scale for the first time on the planet thousands of years ago that realization came to one human being the first flowering of human consciousness the first realization who I am beyond form and it is quite possible that that person was a person whose existence on this planet goes back into the legendary past we know even less about him than we know about Jesus or Buddha and there's the legend in India of Krishna and Krishna may well have been the first human to have realized that dimension within and over time now the amazing thing is that some humans recognized something in him they recognized something of themselves in him but didn't fully know that that was what was happening they recognized something of themselves a purer version an undiluted version of themselves an unobscured version of themselves and over time they associated the formless consciousness that was emerging with the form of the person and so the person became a kind of God in people's eyes in people's thoughts but of course that realization is the emergence of the formless it is not of a person of a form it does not belong to any form it comes when the form becomes somehow transparent is no longer obscured by the density of mental and emotional structures and so that was perhaps the first flowering and then came others here and there and gradually the possibility of this happening this realization could not come on this planet until now for the simple reason that the need for it was not there yet they were preparations one could say almost for the shift in consciousness the early flowerings prototypes exactly the same happened as I mentioned before when flowers first appeared on the planet millions of years of plant life without flowers and one day one plant developed a flower which is one could say another dimension of plant life thousands of years later another flower thousand years later two flowers until finally suddenly a profusion of flowers all over the planet our human evolutionary stage the way humans where we are now is coming to an end the cycle of thought not that thought will not operate anymore but humans are going beyond having to rely predominantly on thought they're going beyond needing to derive their identity from thought and this is a momentous event why is it happening now? for the simple reason that it has to happen now because the old consciousness is becoming increasingly dysfunctional which is normal at the end of an evolutionary cycle things don't work anymore and so even that is fine even the madness that we witness on the planet now and witnessed in past centuries even the madness is good is ultimately part of what is meant to be ultimately and part of it is also recognizing madness as madness recognizing dysfunction as dysfunction is equally important so let this this is an event that goes far beyond this room because on the surface of things not much is happening here a person speaking some people are listening and yet it is part already of the transformation of human consciousness on the planet not significant enough it is not what fit into the news usually although it can happen it's happened but it's rare it's not to a large extent not yet a newsworthy event although once this teaching was on the

national news in Canada but it's rare and they only gave it two and a half minutes but it's a beginning so don't believe entirely don't believe that what you hear or see on television is the entire truth and is the complete news of what's happening on this planet there's a lot happening that is not being mentioned on the news and what is not being mentioned on the news is more significant than that which is mentioned beware of being drawn into reactivity when you watch events happening in the world either into fear or into anger or into despair could happen when you watch the news on television be there as a witnessing presence compassionate that comes naturally with a witnessing presence be there alert just as you watch the tree or the flower you can watch the news or just as you sit with a person who is in pain and talking to you you can watch the news in that way let it happen within a field of peace who is going to bring peace to this world if not you and if enough people watch the news within a field of peace even the news will change it's all happening in consciousness the collective dream of humanity is changing the collective nightmare is changing we are waking up out of the collective nightmare to some extent you could say that all of phenomenal existence is a kind of dream but it becomes a more beautiful dream be careful with the seductive quality of television how it draws you out of the body if you watch for long your attention how it puts you into a semi-hypnotic state how a particular world view is being continuously played out although a few times occasionally something else is coming in these days not often yet if you have to watch it's very helpful to be in the body to feel the inner energy field of body so that you have an anchor that keeps you present and you watch from there something else that pulls your attention out is computer screens staring at it for long periods again it helps to connect with the inner body and at times look away and feel the inner body maybe have a flower next to your computer or a plant something natural if you find it still difficult to perceive without thought which is what I'm here talking about connect with the inner body even if it's only one part of the body and feel the aliveness within that part and then look then you can it is easier to perceive without thought at the same time even at this moment you can look see this room and at the same time feel the aliveness within that's a beautiful way of getting to know what it means to perceive without thought simply in awareness television for many people is almost liberating and it is a little it's a drug it liberates them from their own mind because when you watch television for long periods you're not thinking your own thoughts sometimes you are but a lot of the time when you watch you're simply linking into the collective mind you are forced to think their thoughts so it's not that you become free of mind you become free of the personal aspect your mind your problems but then what you watch is somebody else's problems well that's a little liberation at least it's not your problems very important as this shift happens there are already children coming into this world who are more ready for the shift in consciousness than you and I ever were when we came into this world I wasn't ready a lot of suffering had to happen before the readiness but many children already coming into this world now and they are coming of course still into this culture which is ignorant of such matters no longer totally ignorant because this is becoming almost mainstream now so it is spreading but the structures of society the

school system and so on still to a large extent ignorant the structures are heavy they're in place even if some of the teachers become enlightened they still have to work within the structures of the unenlightened consciousness that is not easy and that applies to many institutions it applies to hospitals where some of the nurses bring in wonderful openness and healing power and love and space if it weren't for them the whole place would already be worse than a mental home it's already getting close to it so it's there are humans within the old institutions and this applies to quite a few of you perhaps there are human beings who are already going through this transformation but they are still working within the old structures and only you can know for yourself by becoming still whether to continue working from within those structures and perhaps bring about a transformation of the structures from within simply by being who you are your consciousness by being conscious within the unconscious structures or it may be that you might find that those structures are so rigid that you see little possibility and then you will know what to do you may remove yourself not through decision making but through waking up one morning and saying that's it it could happen or you may transform them from within in some cases that may be possible there's no general truth here only you can know what the truth is in your particular case they are the economic structures they are the corporations we've heard a lot about them recently the big corporations how they operate are they all evil all the big managers are they evil no they are egoic entities like everybody else just a little bigger because of their position educational social structures all those political so some may collapse and some may become transformed from within nobody can predict how it is going to happen do not leave prematurely just see you will know what is right and if you have to leave life will look after you and this is the truth if you have to starve and you won't if you have to starve you will starve beautifully and then other children who are some of them have to be in those old structures and they may not function very well within them so if you come into contact either as a parent or in some other way with children the greatest gift you can give is the gift of space they are just waiting for it they will recognize it very easily they are waiting for you to give the gift of space and then you give it to each other before you know it they may be teaching you it's all one anyway so the greatest gift is the gift of space and even those children who are still burdened so it seems with the old consciousness strongly identified with the old consciousness the gift of space they also long for deep within and in families the absence of space is the worst aspect of family life in our civilization the one thing that matters isn't there and all the entire family is run by the thinking mind object consciousness one damn thing after another never they don't have meals together anymore they just and even if they had meals together there might not be space you know what Thanksgiving dinners are like in families so it's to provide that in your family especially if they are children be there as space not be consumed by object consciousness not be consumed by things that need to be done that pretend to be important nothing is more important than this and so this begins with a little thing like the ability to listen to their child no matter what the child is talking about just listen the pure the act of pure listening is the greatest thing the act of pure listening

is pure awareness pure listening is the most beautiful thing you can share with another human being even if they are talking coming from the noisy mind it is being received within the spaciousness of pure listening the most powerful thing anybody who can listen becomes an effective healer anybody who can listen from that space as that space if you then put up a little sign and say psychotherapist and your only qualification is that you can listen you would do very well by word of mouth you might not get insurance though and all effective psychotherapists know that they become only effective when they enter that state some of them do after many years of practice simply they get bored with anything else with applying their their particular thought system to the patient patient applying their beliefs as their grid of interpretation labels and then after ten or twenty years they get tired of the labels and then they just sit there and listen and then they find amazing things that sometimes come out of their mouth and at other times amazing things come out of the person's mouth who is sitting with you it's all part of not relying anymore on accumulated knowledge it's still there for little things yes it's good but not relying on that so let's live this now starting right now starting as you move away from this room walking towards your room one step at a time observing the movement of thought that may be there and perhaps the spaciousness being there as you watch nature around you if you watch the film tonight it's about a deepening brought about through some pain that happens through suffering Ram Dass suffered a stroke and experienced an enormous deepening through that so grace the meaning of the title fierce grace is that grace sometimes comes in that form it takes something away from you for example your ability to move about and then grace comes in a different form like this a moment of silence all practice for the rest of this week and this sentence already contains a paradox all practice for the rest of this week is to stay with just this moment and that is the paradox that on the surface of things time seems to be very real within the depths of yourself time ceases to be real so you always have when one speaks of the timeless dimension of consciousness you are using language which is derived from the world of time paradox comes in the practice then is to just stay with this little moment just this one and it's always this one when you're walking out there stripping one step at a time being in the state of yes to this moment that is really all now the yes to so called beautiful sunny warm weather may be a little easier than the yes to cold wet windy weather and you can extend that as almost a metaphor to the rest of your life the strange thing is however that the yes to the cold wet and windy weather takes you even deeper than the yes to the good weather and the deepest is the yes to death that takes you deepest and death is any kind of death physical or psychological or some loss of something that was important to the me something dies part of your identity dies and then the yes takes you very deep the yes to what is so the space opens up immediately with the yes to what is the space that is beyond mind objects thought the thought the mind the mind made self wants this to be even more difficult it would prefer to have an outline of what I am supposed to do for the next 10 years that finally will get me to a space consciousness it would be very happy if I gave you a folder describing the steps to take because it's very happy with being given additional time future it lives on that and

so it is not happy when it hears how simple the transformation of consciousness can be it's not happy that it doesn't require time you mean I'm already enough can't be not me I'm not I'm not ready I have a long way to go surely there's so much that I don't know yet and I still have to learn I've only read a hundred spiritual books there are so many experiences I haven't had yet the fireworks that they talk about well that may be a nice experience but it doesn't last that long and then you are a little me again saying you can be a little me with the added thought form that once fireworks happened to me and then you can live on the dilemma of how to get the fireworks back so the need for more that is built into the structure of the human mind is also here of course but of course realization of who you are is not a more and that includes more knowing knowledge or more understanding which is not necessary that's almost insulting to the mind you mean there is nothing for me to do says the mind if I may quote the philosopher Woody Allen who said I'm always astounded by people who want to understand the universe when it's hard enough to find your way around Chinatown hmm a sneeze can sometimes be satori so the yes to just this just this moment space opens up within spaciousness and miraculously you become truly intelligent I believe it was Krishnamurti who used the expression the awakening of intelligence and that's what it is there's more to intelligence than the mind can conceive the mind being only a tiny aspect of the one intelligence the human mind fine beautiful too except when you seek the totality in it when you seek yourself in it when it becomes all there is you get trapped in a tiny aspect of the totality and that's a little delusion when you're no longer trapped in it the human mind is beautiful too so the practice here is not going beyond what is now with the yes comes space with the space comes and I'm use that word reluctantly with the space comes love not the clinging and wanting love of the egoic self a deeper love the state of love that's inseparable from your essential beingness you love what is and in loving what is the universe actually becomes transformed the universe is not separate from what appears in your consciousness all the forms that appear in your consciousness make up the universe and when there's love that which appears in your consciousness becomes transformed that is the universe and that only works if you do not differentiate between good and bad in your love those teachings have been there for a while somebody else said it in different words two thousand years ago it only works if you don't differentiate between good and bad how do you not differentiate between good and bad the mind the thinking mind operates on the principle of good and bad it discriminates we could call it because that is its essential essential characteristic the discriminating mind the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil the discriminating mind becoming trapped in the discriminating mind and this is why it's so essential to bring the yes to what is an unconditional yes because it is the mind the thinking mind cannot love what is it might love what it judges as desirable and it will reject try to get away from or hate that which it judges as undesirable not helpful judged as no good that's what the thinking mind does it's job to judge so you cannot change the thinking mind in that sense and say I don't want to judge anymore they have tried it because humans heard 2000 years ago judge not your neighbor love thy neighbor as thyself and then they tried not to judge

never never saw that the prerequisite for not judging is to step out of the mind it's only from the dimension of space consciousness that there can be the state of no judgment the moment a thought comes in you have judged something thought can be equated with judgment and there's nothing wrong with that that's what thought does and on it's own level it has a certain helpful function if you don't get lost in it so love arises the moment there is space we could almost equate those two space love is space and it's the only way in which the world can become transformed it transforms the world from within because the world is an inner phenomenon an enormous intelligence begins to operate with a yes when space arises so that's the destiny of humanity is to be every what appears to be the individual human being to be an opening for space one could almost say that all the history of humanity up till now was the pre-history of humanity we're not quite human yet I don't know if there will be any history after this but there may be but it won't be very important as history so you look upon whatever you look upon with love and you love your neighbor as yourself your neighbor is whoever comes into your field of consciousness of course and this is essential practice now when facing another human being I mentioned it briefly yesterday is there space just a little bit of space a little space of no thought as you as your attention is there on another human being a space of the openness of no thought not length doesn't matter the space just open the mind comes in and again the stepping back from mind ideally it's there whenever you listen to anybody then it may be that when you begin to speak you might lose it initially because it's a new way of living and so it's easy for the mind to draw you back into the stream of thinking and if you then remember to step back from thought once you have uttered what you have to say you step back again into space and you listen and after a while you can even sense spaciousness in the background as you speak another way of saying it you can sense yourself your essential beingness in the background as you speak the I am this is probably what a very early spiritual teacher as far as the western world is concerned a contemporary spiritual teacher early 20th century Gurdjieff who spoke of self-remembering remember yourself in any situation it's probably what he meant was that he didn't mean remember the story of yourself remember the essence and it's not even remembering it isn't quite perhaps the most the best way of putting it knowing it being it remembering could lead you to believe that it is some kind of something you think about okay I must think about myself so that's and don't be you will be challenged in two ways by the human mind in this because the human mind senses that it loses its control predominance and that's the challenge comes from within and it comes from other human minds which come disguised as human beings most human beings they carry a disguise of mind or the other way around the mind disguises itself as a human being the being is there but where and that is the skill the art of penetrating beyond mind in others of not getting caught up in that density when you are facing another human being not getting caught up in the density that frequency that vibrational frequency that is the human mind because otherwise you get caught up in it and you become reactive which means it stimulates your own mind and that's the normal human interaction you can only penetrate beyond that if you have

gone beyond it within yourself it's only then that you can go beyond that in others but with the yes applies here also the yes to what is when what is is a human being right in front of you that is the form that this moment takes and that may be the most difficult yes of all compared to which the yes to bad weather is easy you could be in the Canadian Arctic and that yes would be easy compared to the yes that is needed sometimes quite often when you meet a human mind and here we have really I don't remember who said it perhaps it was Ram Dass who said relationships are the sadhana the spiritual practice for the west the main spiritual practice for the west is in and through relationships encountering other humans that's the challenge the greatest challenge that challenge has different levels to it the more you are linked with these humans for some reason through family ties one could say the more past you share with another human being the harder it may be practice this at first when you encounter relatively uncomplicated encounters with humans seemingly superficial interactions and it's amazing how people reduce all those interactions and of those there are many throughout the day how they reduce them to a means to an end when you have superficial interactions ordering a meal in a restaurant paying for your food buying a newspaper meeting someone in an elevator talking to the cleaner coming in whatever it may be many kinds of brief seemingly interactions that only seem to be a means to an end because in the mind-identified state the present moment is always a means to an end so in the mind-identified state whoever appears in this moment is also a means to an end it's a dreadful reduction and impoverishment of human existence to live in such a way that most of your encounters with other humans both superficial encounters and even other encounters longer other kinds of relationships are really in the mind-identified state a means to some end because you're never fully present in the now in that state you always want something else out of this now the now is a stepping stone to where I want to get so now all those meetings whenever you meet anybody it's a wonderful opportunity for the arising of space in that meeting which is love also and all that it requires is to look at this human being and to listen if they're saying something in the spacious awareness which has no thought in it just that alertness this is why we're here the whole reason why we're here is to know that state of consciousness to look the same way you look at a flower or tree and perhaps at the same time if there is an interaction it's taking place the waiter comes you look up from the menu two seconds one second and then you say what you have to say and then he or she asks the question and you look and then you say what you have to say there's a little bit of space there is part of the interaction where you are not playing a role in that interaction when there is space when there is no space it's almost inevitable that you will slip into some kind of role in a restaurant and this is unconscious in a restaurant you play the role of the customer and there's a subtle difference then in the way in which you speak to that other human being and the waiter or waitress may be trapped in their own role playing the role as waiter waitress and you can sometimes see it when they come sometimes some of them play their role well they get a good tip others don't play it very well either they play their role reluctantly and then there are other roles that humans play and you

observe yourself whenever the mind is there there'll be some kind of role that you play even to yourself alone in your room you play the role of perhaps you're the victim and you're thinking about your victimhood and and I'm not saying stop playing roles that would be a big demand but what is possible is to be there when you do play roles to know that there's a role to notice it you notice it for example if you behave and speak differently to that famous person that you meet and the waiter or the person who comes to do the cleaning are there slight or considerable differences in the ways in which you speak to them or interact with them perhaps they are which means you're playing roles which means you're the basis for your interaction is a conceptualized sense of self and you're imposing another conceptualized self on the other person and two conceptualized selves then play their respective roles the famous person may be playing their own role unless they are so famous that they've seen the emptiness of it and they've gone beyond it and you might still persist in imposing a conceptual identity people do it with spiritual teachers believing when they meet a spiritual teacher they're meeting somebody important they're not they're not meeting anybody except themselves they might get nervous when they see a spiritual teacher are you nervous when you're meeting yourself? strange but because they have a conceptual identity of somebody important and then you have another conceptual identity of somebody who is not very important and you may have a conceptual identity of yourself as important or not important or you might not even quite know whether you're important or not important sometimes the world tells you this and sometimes the world tells you that this includes all opinions you have of yourself and that's an interesting thing that's more concepts opinions that you have of yourself are ultimately all parts of roles concepts not real whatsoever is it possible to live without having an opinion about yourself do you lose something important when you no longer have an opinion about who you are in this life you just are at any moment when you live in the now that goes automatically it falls away with the awareness that is there the opinions that you have become unimportant the whole conceptual structure falls away in the immediacy of present moment awareness the entire conceptual structures fall away so you are no longer imposing those structures on yourself or on others no opinions can I live without having opinions about myself am I losing something important your opinions may be predominantly good or predominantly bad and there is a reluctance in both cases of letting go because there is an attachment I won't know who I am anymore at least I know that I am a wretched miserable being and so it is so the liberating thing is that that becomes unimportant the more there is that spaciousness in your life the more those things fall away the conceptual structures about yourself are not important they are not who you are and then you don't inflict them on others that's the beauty of it when they fall away within yourself that conceptualized self you don't inflict the conceptualized self on others which is it sounds shocking we could say it is the first act of violence the very root of violence is to because it's deadening the humanity the essential beingness the essential aliveness of the other human being which ultimately is no other and you will only do that if you have deadened it in yourself first and that is the dilemma of humanity in its present

evolutionary stage amazing so to see in some ways we are this is why it's so wonderful to watch an animal because an animal too has no opinion about itself it is that's why the dog is so joyful and why the cat purrs if the dog had an opinion about him or herself that unconditional love wouldn't be there anymore because the dog would then also inflict an opinion on you and it might not be good and so the dog would be thinking oh here he comes again so you are meeting another human being in that space of no thought brief perhaps it's fine and there you there is a true coming together a true meeting beyond concepts beyond roles or opinions and if you should slip into roles it may now be easier to notice it when it happens to notice the subtle changes in your behavior and speech when you relate to different kinds of people according to the concepts you hold in your mind about those people and how you compare your own self concept with their self that self concept is he or she more important than me and that will determine the role you play does he know more than me is he whatever it is and then a little wanting comes in you want something from he who you think is more than you comparison is a continuous thing that the egoic mind structure uses continuous comparison of me with others I can only evaluate me by comparing me to others how do I rate here and that determines the conceptual structure of me and then you try to improve it with all kinds of strange things name dropping hoping that if you are talking to someone you drop a name hoping that in that association with that name which is a concept belief this is a famous person and you know him that your own self concept something is added to it that will give greater worth to yourself this is why the names are dropped in the hope that in the eyes of that other person so you are hoping that this person you are talking to will give you more recognition through dropping the name of somebody else who is famous or has some other high status so it's a hope to gain a stronger self and name dropping is only a small example of the strategies used by the ego to enhance itself it's always looking out for something and so you may observe that even some spiritually advanced people occasionally can catch themselves name dropping when I talk to my friend so and so Ram Das called me the other day so and this is it is whenever you notice something like that it's not really a personal thing either this is how the egoic human mind operates and the noticing it and that's the amazing thing when you notice it there are still many humans in this world who are trapped in these patterns and don't know it they are totally those patterns noticing it is actually the arising of space consciousness from where you can see what the mind is doing and so whenever you notice a pattern a role that you are playing some conceptual game that's a wonderful thing it's not that now this is the mind from the brief insight that you have there the realization of what is going on inside you that could immediately be used by the mind again and then formulate a judgment about yourself which could be oh you see you are still deficient in spirituality you see you can't you're doing it again all that silly you're still playing silly games that everybody else is playing you're no good for example or other things are possible too but if you stay with the noticing that means it's only from the unconditioned dimension of consciousness that you can see the conditioned from within the conditioned after you've seen it you might judge it that's the conditioned again it's only so whatever you see in yourself even the

worst so called traits of humanity because all of humanity is within each human being it may not be manifested but all of humanity is within each human and you might discover evil thoughts I think those thoughts I there is no I beyond those thoughts there is the deepest that the deepest I am is not thinking those thoughts those thoughts are clouds they are human thoughts floating around and often people believe all their thoughts are come from them there is only really one human mind there's a collective human mind and it's almost like clouds can float into your mind from other minds and you think certain thoughts and you think it's me all it is it's a collective human mind operating so you can discover all strange things in yourself and the temptation is there to judge yourself as not yet worthy or might never be worthy or you should definitely not be having these thoughts and so you are making them into a problem a personal problem the thoughts are personalized and they become problematic and you give them more power because the making them problematic is further thought activity is further self self activity the mind made self it loves whatever dilemma you can find it loves it and the more complex the dilemma of yourself the better surely I need twenty years of psychoanalysis to get through all this to get to the bottom of it all well if you examined the mind bit by bit yes it would take a long time where did this thought come from oh so whatever you notice in yourself is beautiful because the noticing the seeing is already liberation from being completely identified with whatever thoughts or emotions are happening inside you and so you can just stay with the seeing and seeing it is human the human mind that's all it is and you just watch oh that means you are more interested in seeing being the witness than getting into the thought or reacting to the thought which creates further thought it draws you in and the amazing thing is when you see patterns especially repeatedly they tend to drop away after a while by themselves don't have to do anything patterns that are no longer invested with sense of self but are recognized as patterns they drop away it's only through complete self identification with patterns that they go on and on and on and so the recognition comes with stepping back so now let's go back to the interactions there is a human being the question is even in the briefest of interactions it is your life is made up of these things your life is made up of what relatively insignificant moments the moments that the mind tells you are significant are relatively few and it might be waiting for one it might have been waiting for a long time I'm waiting for a significant moment in my life then I came to a retreat I thought that might do it there's a watch they have the advertising slogan I don't remember what watch so maybe it's not a good slogan it's a there's the watch and somebody is looking at it and is saying significant moment significant moments so I suppose whenever you look at that watch that moment becomes significant presumably it's an expensive watch and so your conceptual self becomes significant when you remember that you're wearing it a lot of the consumer industry works like that to enhance your sense of self through an image a fiction yeah of course but they don't know it's a fiction it's their self so life consists unless you have an expensive watch of insignificant and one of the things that people are waiting for because in the normal state of consciousness you're always waiting for something and really you're waiting for something significant to happen and

not that often does it happen and it doesn't last very long the wedding comes and goes and then daily existence is there breakfast every morning so and then you're meeting all these people these insignificant people in your daily interactions hoping to meet somebody significant and not realizing that you are missing the whole thing you're missing your whole life in the waiting game in the conceptual waiting game you're missing your whole life and every encounter with another human being is potentially a beautiful meeting with yourself is potentially the most significant event there could be even the briefest encounter when there is a recognition of the other as yourself which is there in the space perhaps brief space of no thought which of course implies no concepts no roles no mental positions there is the end of the illusion of separateness the illusion of separation which has been there for so long and so you meet the ticket collector a casual person you meet on the plane or whatever brief encounters in the day and each time there is the possibility of being there as space not as a little me and its role so that's and that is a beautiful practice which then becomes extended to those people with whom you share more past and the past that you share is of course an accumulation of concepts in your mind about them otherwise there would be no past that you share there may also be certain emotions that are linked to the concepts about concerning those people so you carry a little mental emotional form formation one could almost say entity because thought forms are entities emotional fields are entities they have a life span they are born they die and so you have a for each person with whom you share past you have inside yourself a little mental emotional formation and that is the conceptual image that you hold in your mind for that person when you only know you are completely identified with mind then to you that conceptual emotional image that you hold that is based on past is that person you are completely trapped in that conceptual emotional formation so this is you have constructed it unconsciously not that you have done it it's been done it's done automatically a little entity a little mental formation that when you are totally identified with that to you is that other person is your wife your ex-wife your ex-lover your lover your father your mother your aunt or whoever else it may be with whom you or the person you've worked with for a long time your boss whoever it may be you have that you carry that and that wants to remain in place what tends to happen is then all your interactions with that human being happening through the filter of that conceptual mental entity that you have because you're not seeing who is there you have there will be things in that human being that you cannot see because they're not part of the image that you hold and certainly you cannot see the deeper reality of that human being which is beyond any concepts any story part of the concepts is the concepts form a little story too that's part of that formation so when you're totally identified with that then that is the agent through which you interact with that person you're really interacting with your mental image another thing that tends to happen is all you see from that person then after a while is what corresponds and will strengthen that image that you already hold of that person other things you may not even see because they are not perception is selective so they will be that is how your interactions with other humans become very limited and become totally mind dominated and that is how do you step out of that that

prison which first you have constructed for yourself you put yourself into a prison because you have formed the same kind of image for who you are the me the little me as I call it the little me with it's story it's memories it's patterns it's reactive patterns and then the little me forms little other me's around it and that's that's the the prison cell that people inhabit you may not become immediately free of all that but freedom is here as you step out of conceptual thinking that's the beginning of that losing it's overriding hold upon you all those conceptual structures and of course there is a reluctance the conceptual structures these little formations almost entities isn't it amazing that you have a you have a little a little human a little being in there that is called my ex-wife and she lives in here my ex-husband whatever or my wife or my husband after many years of marriage it is not uncommon for partners married couple not they hardly see each other anymore they just have the image of the other there is nobody there just in the distant background there is a body sitting and there is the image body image the old you may have noticed it happens sometimes that when as people become more conscious many of the old conceptual patterns behavior patterns fall away this I am sure has happened to many of you already through the arising of the unconditioned consciousness many of the old patterns become less empowered they just lose their force and then you might meet somebody you have known for a long time family whoever they don't see they to them if they are totally identified with their image they won't even see what you have changed they just continue they want to project the old image they are refusing to let go of that and you might want to say hello I am here they may also resent that somehow they can feel that there is now a clash between who you are and their image and they might become angry because the image doesn't fit anymore what have you done I don't like the way you are now I don't like you are too conscious so with those this is a beautiful challenge those humans with whom you share a lot of past to bring in that openness in your interactions the cause in miracles speaks of relating to another human being without past easier said than done you might say in this moment that human appears in front of you and you are giving that human being an full attention the same attention that you give to the tree or the flower that human being may be going through their conditioned behavior and yet you are simply giving the most powerful thing there is simply giving being attentive listening and looking listening looking to be able to do that there needs to be a yes you have to allow that human being to be here at this moment you might as well because they are here at this moment they are right in front of you I noticed a little to illustrate this a little anecdote I once knew a woman not in a personal not in an intimate relationship an acquaintance who was regarded by most people as one of the most obnoxious people around what here comes trouble would be when she comes you would know she would be accusing you of something wanting something wanting you to get involved in her problems complaining constantly so those were her patterns and I noticed once I was living in a small town where that she also lived two or three times I noticed there was basically only one high street as they call it where the shops are main street in the town I was walking the high street and more than once I noticed myself as I saw her coming the other way was crossing over to the other side but

then once or twice or more than that it happened that as I was approaching a corner she was coming around the corner too late and then I noticed a very strange thing the moment she stood in front of me there was space and love the person that I wanted to avoid if I could but when I couldn't avoid her anymore there she was and there was spaciousness and love and next time I would avoid her again but when she couldn't be avoided it was beautiful and a few times in our interactions she felt something something fell away from her and she walked away as if some weight had been lifted there was actually love there it was penetrating and it was beyond those mind structures simply spaciousness was there just a strange a strange thing I somebody noticed once that I crossed to the other side and then asked why are you doing it well it just happened there there was no decision making involved it's like it's very much like avoiding a thunderstorm or downpour of rain if you can if you let's say if you walk this way around and you you this perhaps is similar it's a kind of but if you get caught in the rain and if you say yes it's beautiful so there may be human beings in your life that you would not perhaps choose to interact with and you don't have to unless life puts you in a position where you do have to and then at that moment the totality has determined that this is the ideal situation for you and for that person otherwise that person wouldn't be there so you do not need to seek out those people whom you can't stand but it may be that for some reason this person keeps coming up in your life and the universe is not insane the human mind in its present form perhaps is insane but the universe there is an underlying intelligence at work and that underlying intelligence knows what it is doing things are connected at a deeper level all humans are connected sometimes it comes to the surface as a synchronistic event as a coincidence and you see how is that possible and what you see is only a tiny flash that is coming to the surface of things to show you the interconnectedness of all things on a deeper level so whatever is at this moment is part of the totality and could not be otherwise it is because it could not be otherwise and so to see the inevitability of is which might mean this human being that I would rather not be with it is challenging or difficult for some reason he or she is in my life and that is your teacher then if there is a human who is there that human must be my teacher what is he or she teaching me what is this unconscious person going to teach me it's teaching you this giving attention listening looking allowing to be this moment as it is and thus going beyond conceptual structures in your interaction and you may well be ready for this even to practice some of you may have a long standing issue perhaps with a parent or somebody very close to you a long history of judgment of resentment carrying that inside and the other person carrying that inside and it may well be that before you do it in the actual presence of that person to be there fully in that spaciousness you might the image may arise in your mind of that human being and you give attention and allow that image to be there in the spaciousness that you are and perhaps you begin then to penetrate to go deeper than the conceptual entity in your head forgiveness is really that ultimately forgiveness is letting go of conceptual identity for yourself and others give them space give them space which is yourself recognize the feelings that you have and the thoughts that you have as formations as formations that live a formation that lives

inside you the recognition of it means there is now through the seeing of it as a formation there is space around it that means that is forgiveness that is freeing and because all things are interconnected it is not uncommon for people who do that on an inner level for suddenly to happen that that person suddenly experiences something similar to what you experience some letting go not always the case you don't need it you don't need the other person to go through that also that's a bonus might happen but it has happened and people have reported it as miracles in some cases it's happened that the moment that shift happened when they saw the limitations of the conceptual identity they were holding and space arose which is love around it you don't love that conceptual you don't love the conditioning that entity that you might want to cross the road to go to the other side of the road for you love the being because the being is space and you are space that essential beingness and it's not uncommon for humans who've done on an inner level that shift happened and five minutes later the phone rang and it was that person I've heard similar stories more than once the phone rang and after years of no contact that person rang how is that possible?

because of the interconnectedness of all things so Jesus already pointed to the fact how important in your spiritual life what he called your enemies are how important love your enemies now they understood that in a very limited sense and tried to do it through the structure of thought ok, I've got to try and love him ok ok I just can't I hate him or you hear that and you just but you exclude two or three people from that I love of course him or her don't even mention so that's a beautiful challenge bringing that into those relationships long standing that have passed that spiritual practice so those people who keep cropping up in your life you can't get rid of use them as teachers or presence you're supposed to be with them otherwise they wouldn't be there in some cases it's family members grown up children parents doing mad things you wouldn't associate with them you wouldn't want to be with them in the same room in some cases this is how people feel if he weren't my father my mother we would have nothing in common except for the fact that he or she is my father or mother some people feel that or daughter or son or some other close relation and they're there for a reason you may have more in common than you realize yes you certainly have more in common than you realize this is beautiful the rain the truth being spoken and realized here the possibility of going within could there be a better moment than this moment if you start thinking yes if you don't think no then you realize the goodness of this moment the depths of it the incredible goodness but if you start thinking you will think about a beach in Hawaii perhaps or some other place it's always some other place could there be a better moment can lead you into thinking let me think yes there could be or the question could there be a better moment can take you deeply into this moment and the beauty and sacredness of this moment something that thought cannot capture and so awareness it is known through awareness it's inseparable from awareness so there's always that dimension of the sacred that now is always sacred and that is amazing no matter what form it takes and of course naturally as you become free of the conceptual heaviness you look and listen

more attention arises to sense perceptions the sacredness isn't perhaps in the sound of this rain it's underneath it the mind says there is no mystery here water molecules are dripping and when they hit the ground they produce a sound that's the illusion of knowledge you still don't really know what it is the sacredness of course is the space that is inseparable from you in which this happens the world that is arising in you at this moment the phenomenal it's arising in that space the background the noise foreground but it's almost these natural phenomena like rain it's almost as if that space were still coming through even the phenomenon somebody once put it beautifully and said god made everything out of nothing but the nothingness still shines through still and so the nothingness the no thingness the one life beyond form shining through this rain too make the rest of today a time of stillness of going within and also being present without and with just this this moment stay with it it is unlikely that anything significant according to the mind will happen today but go more deeply into the seemingly insignificant and realize how significant that truly is there's not even a tv here so definitely nothing significant will happen we'll address any questions that have survived in your mind tomorrow in the now laughter the only teaching this week has been learning to look and listen in the state of openness